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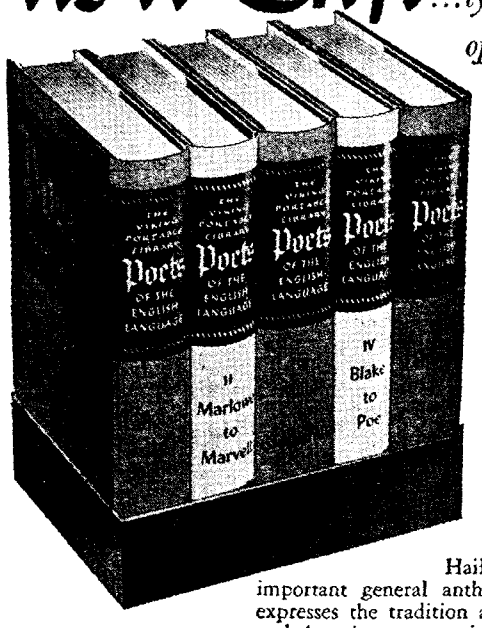

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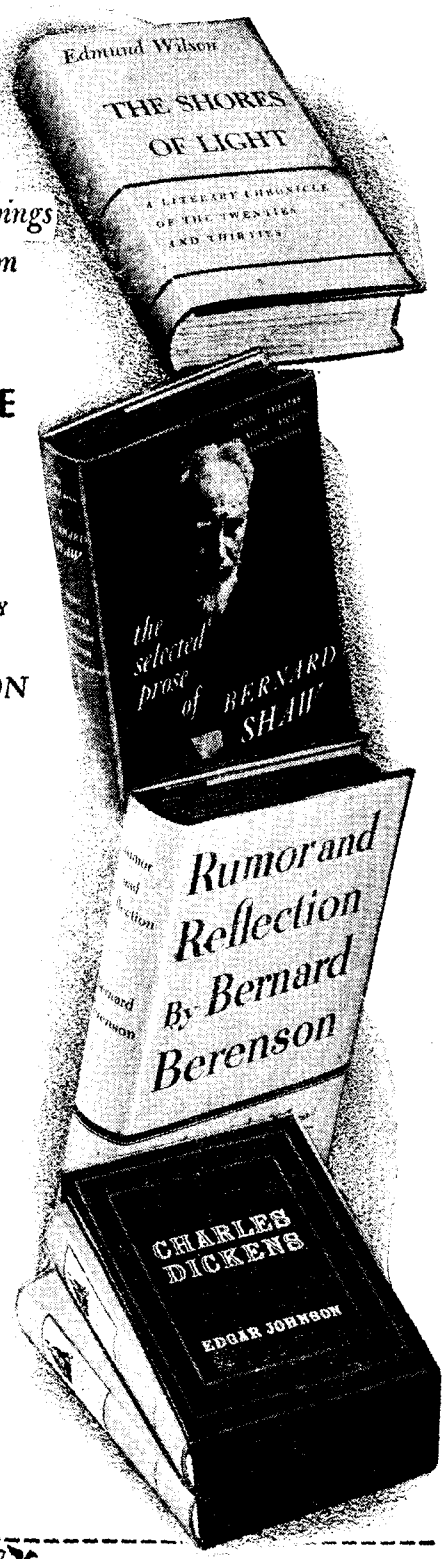

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Here, from some recent and forthcoming books, is a private anthology of passages I found amusing, or instructive, or both:

¶ "The brain, like Rhenish wine, should be chilled, not iced, to be at its best. Women, however, are best at room temperature."—A. J. Liebling, "The Honest Rainmaker"

¶ "We are all egoists at heart; or, to put it less unkindly, our own sorrows are just about as much as we have the strength to take on." — V. Sackville-West, "The Easter Party"

¶ "T. K. Whipple described the literary development of Willa Cather as the victory of mind over Nebraska." — E. K. Brown, "Willa Cather"

¶ "About the great rake, though we are bound to deplore it, there is usually a streak of distinction —the distinction, if you like, of being odd, ruthless, even crazy; about the great husband, alas, there is something very ordinary indeed. (And about the ordinary husband, something more ordinary than that.)" — William Cooper, "The Struggles of Albert Woods," a comic novel about ambition (To be published April 8)

¶ "The man who can conquer the dominance of the iambic pentameter, in our verse, or find a way to subordinate it, can conquer our world."—William Carlos Williams, "7 Arts" (A Permabooks anthology, 50¢)

¶ "I should like to have been present when the lady, on being reproached for burning the candle at both ends, said: 'Why, I thought that was the way to make both ends meet.' "—W. Somerset Maugham, "The Vagrant Mood," a collection of new essays

What have *you* read recently that you thought worth copying down? Send it to me before April 15. I have five copies of Somerset Maugham's "The Vagrant Mood" to give for the most interesting ones I receive.

L. L. Day

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MARCH 28, 1953

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Good News

▶ From Korea have come reports about the Ethiopian battalion fighting under the U. N. command. These African warriors are fighting with such skill and bravery that many Americans have said they would rather be out on patrol with them than any other troops. The Ethiopians have never been known to leave their dead or wounded on the battlefield. They were the first unit in the Seventh Infantry Division to contribute to the fund to send U. S. athletes to the Olympic Games in Finland last spring. The battalion gave nearly two thousand dollars to help build a school for Korean children. And one American captain who spent some time with them reported: "You know what they do when they go on pass to Tokyo? They spend all day going to the museums, looking at the sights, and listening to the opera—all the things good little American boys should but don't do."

▶ While the Board of Education in Los Angeles, Calif., was busy recently abolishing the UNESCO program from the city schools system, other groups both here and abroad were continuing to reaffirm their faith in UNESCO's ideals. The Austrian National Commission for UNESCO awarded several literary prizes to works illustrating the ideals of the United Nations and UNESCO. First prize for an already-published drama went to author Seigfried Freiberg for his play "The Little World Hostel." A young playwright, Friedrich Kaufman, won the prize for the best non-published drama with his play based upon the struggle for human rights.

At its recent conference at Buenos Aires, the International Telecommunications Union made several important UNESCO-supported decisions that favor freedom of information throughout the world. One was a formal recommendation to the ITU's eighty-eight members that they facilitate the unrestricted transmission of news by telecommunication services. Another was an amendment to the ITU's charter that stresses the aim of using telecommunications as a way of improving relations between peoples.

▶ In Portland, Ore., the city board of motion-picture review, consisting of eight citizen censors, recommended to the city council that it be abolished. Over a period of two years the censorship board has found objectionable scenes in only twelve out of 1,853 motion pictures reviewed. "The cost in time and money is too great for the results obtained," the board said.

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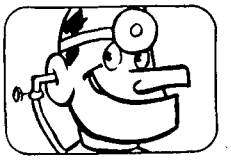
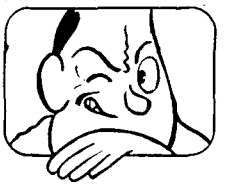


The *PHONY DOCTOR* who peeks into your bathroom.



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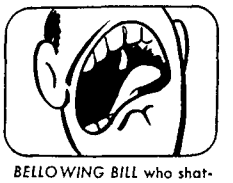
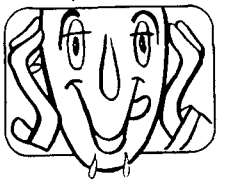


BELLOWING BILL who shatters your ear-drum.



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"ANNAPURNA" (Published by E. P. Dutton) makes wonderful "escape" reading but, for myself, I'll still take the express elevator in the Empire State Building. Mr. Herzog's thrilling chronicle reminded me of the explorer who thought he had scaled a mountain never before climbed by man, only to find a furtive character seated on the very peak, who put a finger to his mouth and whispered, "S-s-sh! I'm in the underground!" . . . And then, of course, there's Harry Ruby's classic of the probing fiend who demanded of a rabid baseball fan: "Suppose you came upon your wife and Joe Di Maggio, both clinging by their finger tips to the edge of a precipice. Below them yawned a chasm ten thousand feet deep. You had time to rescue only one of them. Which would you allow to perish?" The ball fan's unhesitating answer has become famous the country over: "Are you nuts? My wife couldn't hit the side of a barn door!"

ADRIAN CONAN DOYLE had more reason than most for seeking adventure in far-off places. He got so tired of having people ask, "Are you really the son of *the* Conan Doyle who invented Sherlock Holmes?" that he journeyed all the way down to the East Coast of Africa, where he chartered a tiny boat and had a series of adventures in big-game fishing that more timorous anglers are reading about in a frenzy of mingled excitement and envy. "Heaven Has Claws," Mr. Doyle calls his book, and now that he's gotten it off his chest, and seen it launched to an impressive start, he's settled down with John Dickson Carr to writing a dozen yarns that will take up the adventures of Sherlock Holmes where his father left off. Random House will publish them in book form this fall.

Another thrilling saga of the sea is Captain J. Y. Cousteau's "The Silent World" (Harper), a story of underseas exploring that contains an account of a fight to the death with a huge shark that will make your hair stand on end. The author, however, maintains that fighting sharks isn't half as dangerous as an exploit performed thousands of times a day by unthinking New Yorkers: dodging across Fifth Avenue against the lights!

I MUST TELL YOU of one other adventure tale that engrossed me in the closing days of my California vacation. It was "Amazon Head-Hunters," by Lewis Cotlow (published by Holt). When Mr. Cotlow wearies periodically of the insurance business he scurries off for a visit with the Jivaro Indians in the jungles of Ecuador. If you ever want

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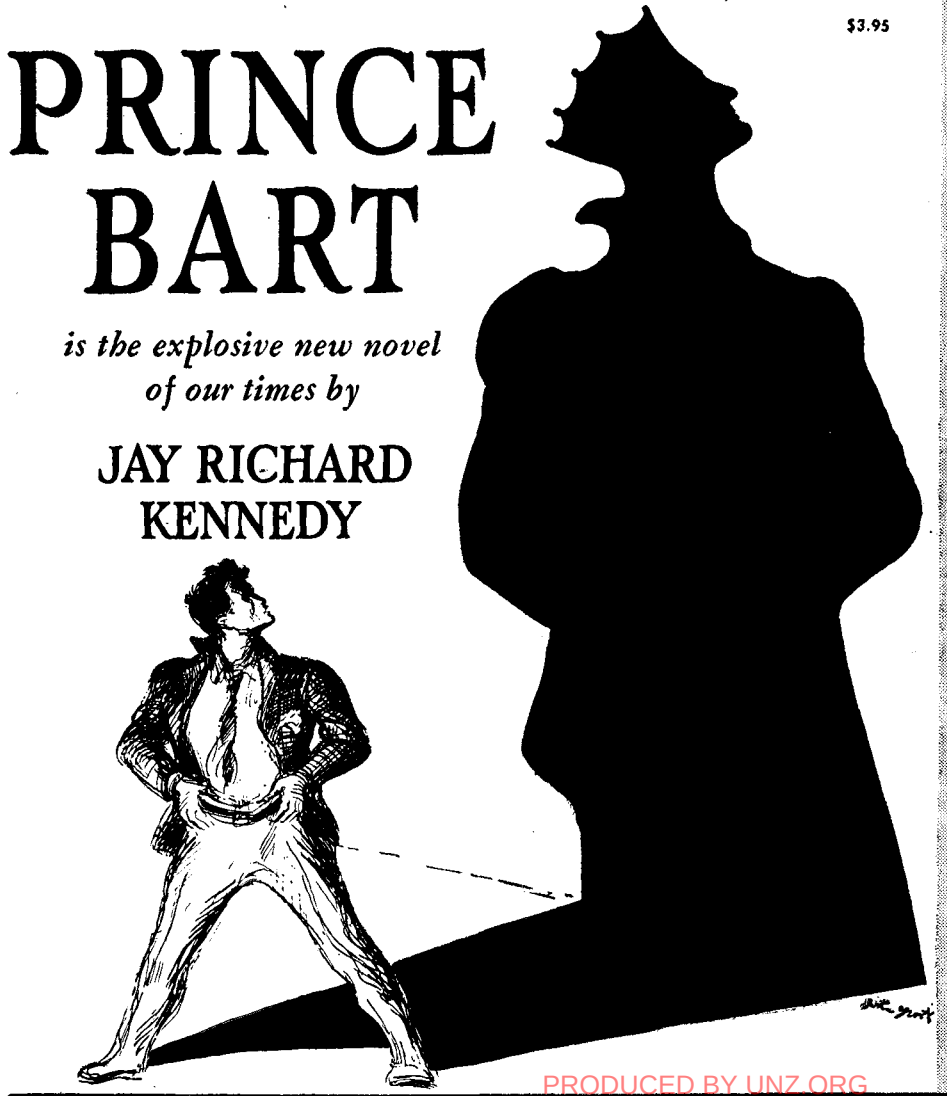

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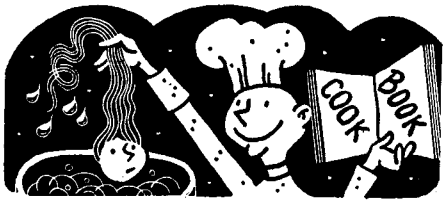
a head shrunken with a minimum of fussing and mess around the house, consult your nearest Jivaro Indian. He has learned early in life that the only acceptable thing to do with a slain enemy's cranium is to lop it off, and boil down to size. The recipe: cut the head off gently, taking as much skin as possible from the shoulders. Slit the skin up the back of the head and extract the skull. The lips and head can be held together with thread and ordinary pins, and the head preserved to desired shape by temporary insertion of small heated stones. Then boil slowly until you have a Tsantsa—or shrunken head—about the size of a baseball. (The things you learn reading TRADE WINDS!) . . . Incidentally, Lewis Cotlow explains that when a Jivaro has melted a rival's skull down to size, it becomes the centerpiece of a hopped-



up victory dance. When the dance is over the shrunken head loses its significance and is sold to the first souvenir hunter who comes along. At the height of the feuding season tsantsas are virtually a drug on the market, which probably explains the origin of the Rodgers and Hart song "Ten Cents a Tsantsa."

THE CURRENT RAGE for true adventure stories, coupled with people's insatiable craving for literature calculated to improve their minds, their gardens, their menus, relations with their children—anything, in fact, in preference to the old-fashioned love stories they once adored—has resulted in a veritable revolution, not only in book publishing but, at a more accelerated rate, in the magazine world, in the past decade. Fiction monthlies have slumped disastrously. One of

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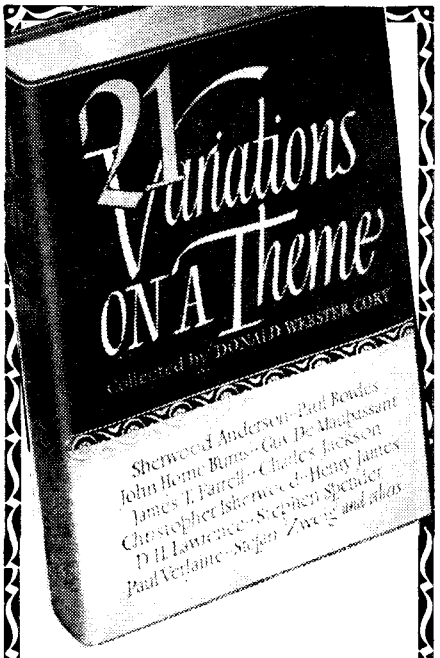
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the leaders in that field has just cut its circulation guarantee from 2,000,000 a month to 700,000. Others have reduced their fiction quota from 70 per cent of the total editorial content to less than a third, substituting service and self-help articles and on-the-spot news and adventure stories from all over the world.

But is this a permanent state of affairs? William Nichols, editor of *This Week* magazine, thinks there is a cyclic swing in magazine history with a major shift about every twenty-five years. The last came in the mid-Twenties, he points out, with the birth of *Time*, *The New Yorker*, and *The Reader's Digest*, followed soon after by the impact of the picture magazines. Now a new one is under way. He guesses that the downturn in magazine fiction has about run its course, with a big revival in imminent prospect. He also predicts (and not altogether disinterestedly) that there will be a shift in magazine reading from mid-week to weekends, which means increased importance for the burgeoning field of Sunday newspaper magazines.

One factor that has hastened the growth of Sunday supplement magazines like *This Week* and *American Weekly* and picture magazines like *Life* and *Look* is the development of high-speed rotary presses, and the gravure Dultgen process, perfected by the inventor and the *New York Daily News*, and then leased to other gravure printers. One of the biggest is the Alco Gravure Company, which prints *This Week*, half of *Look*, color pages for the mail-order companies, and a score of local gravure sections. The Dultgen process enables gravure presses to turn out 28,000 well-printed, complete, full-color magazines or Sunday supplements in a single hour, whereas the finest letter-presses of the old type rarely exceeded 13,000. It gets excellent results on relatively low-grade paper, too, permitting publishers to sell color advertising at the

rate of approximately $3 per thousand circulation instead of the $4 to $5 that prevailed formerly. Bear in mind that it is the big advertisers who really make or break a magazine. When they fold their tents and depart for greener pastures the deserted medium, regardless of its circulation, is a dead duck. In fact, the bigger the circulation of a magazine with inadequate advertising lineage the quicker it is forced to suspend or merge.

If the current upheaval in the magazine world interests you, ask your dealer to tell you what his best sellers were in 1940, and then compare the list with his "hot" items today! "It is the human factor—public demand—which is the ultimate determinant in the success or failure of a book or magazine," Mr. Nichols reminds us. "However much you mechanize your operation, perfect your distribution, or tabulate your market, your ultimate consumer is still the unpredictable human being. Pause and consider how often in your own thinking you talk about your consumer in some segmentized, compartmentalized, mechanized way. He is the 'policy holder.' He is the 'subscriber.' He is the 'depositor.' Or the 'client.' Or the 'patient.' Or the 'passenger.' One tends to forget that above all else he is human, and that in the end success depends upon the ability to find out *what he is thinking about, where he is going, and what he wants.*"

Lord help us all!

—BENNETT CERF.

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Primarily good reading, this book concerns itself with musicians whose careers seemed to Mr. Gelatt important in their effect on musical interpretation. Each chapter gives the chief facts of the musician's life, emphasizing those aspects of it which shaped his musical personality. Each attempts to analyze its subject's special gifts, the reasons why he performs as he does, and his influence on other musicians.

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The Saturday Review

MARCH 28, 1953

The Freedom to Explore

SLOAN WILSON

Sloan Wilson

NORBERT Wiener's just published autobiography, "Ex-Prodigy,"* is interesting chiefly because it is a fragment of an astonishing man. It is only a small fragment—it tells the story of his life from his birth in 1894 until 1926, when at the age of thirty-one he was married. It is a reserved almost reticent account of youth, and it barely hints at Wiener's extraordinary work since 1926. But to anyone who knows anything about the man, it is a fascinating book. For this reason the best way to review this autobiography is to discuss its author.

He is a short heavy man with a beard, a scientist and a professor at MIT. He is known to the public chiefly as the author of a book called "Cybernetics," and of another called "The Human Use of Human Beings." Both volumes deal with communications and control in both man and machine. To people who don't know him very well, he is also thought of as a somewhat eccentric professor—a man who likes to throw peanuts in the air and catch them in his mouth, and a genius who shows an unscientific capacity for overbidding at bridge. There are those who feel glee in pointing out that in spite of his extraordinary mind he is only fairly good at chess.

To point out such foibles is like seeking flaws in the pyramids. As a matter of fact, the title of the autobiography—"Ex-Prodigy"—is ironic, although it was probably not planned that way. Wiener is interesting because he entered college at the age of eleven, but he is more interesting because he is chiefly responsible for the thinking that led to the great electronic brains and calculating machines which, among other things, may cause a second industrial revolution, one in which machines will eventually take over the work of many men's minds just as they have already taken over the work of many men's hands. And what is even more pertinent, he is both a scientist who has helped to devise incredible weapons of destruction and a humanitarian of unusual sensitivity. Because of this, he is confronted by contradictions which every American citizen faces—only he has them dropped right in his lap. He worries about the destruction new weapons may cause, and about the unemployment the unwise introduction of new labor-saving devices might bring about.

In spite of his scientific achievements, he is anything but a "big shot" in the usual sense of the phrase. His office at MIT is less pretentious than that of the junior personnel man at most large corporations. His house in Belmont, Mass., might easily be occupied by the owner of a fairly successful small-town hardware store. His reason for avoiding the trimmings of wealth, power, and prestige is simple: "I don't have time for them."

He has a strong inclination to like and trust people, but he is not a dear, kind old scientist who except for his technical ability has the mind of a child. "Don't make a Little Nell out of me," he says. "They've made a Little Nell out of Einstein, and I think it's insulting to the man."

Although he occasionally gets angry and depressed and terribly tired, he's not a half-crazy genius. He's had plenty of emotional problems, but he's beaten them.

He's very much a citizen of the world, but he's not an internationalist in the sense of putting other countries above his own. He likes to point out that the Russian scientists, even in these days when Russia is inventing everything but the American flag, are careful to give him credit for his published work when they describe their variations of it in international scholarly journals, but that *Pravda* has called him "a fat, cigar-smoking slave-scientist."

"I'm fully aware that I wouldn't last ten minutes in Russia," Wiener said a few weeks ago. "I have no desire to move from the amateur witch burners here to the professional ones there."

Although he is not only a great mathematician, but a physicist, an engineer, and an expert in almost all the physical sciences, he is more than a scientist. He speaks at least six languages, is uncommonly knowledgeable about art and literature, and has a doctor's degree in philosophy. Still, he is not, as a psychiatrist once described him, "a man whose intelligence is so far above normal that he must feel as you or I would if we were living in a world of ten-year-olds—ten-year-olds who were just as big as we were physically, and had the same political and legal rights." Of that opinion, Wiener says, "Nonsense! If ladies weren't present, I'd use a stronger word than that. Except for

*EX-PRODIGY: My Childhood and Youth. By Norbert Wiener. New York: Simon & Schuster. 310 pp. $3.95.

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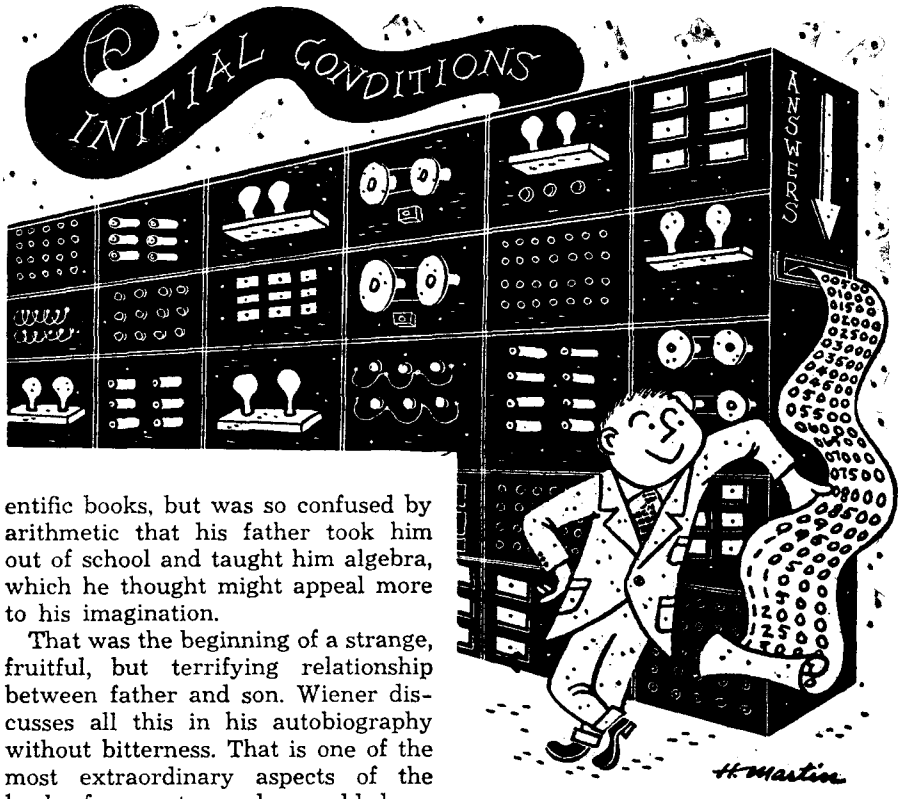
a few highly developed skills, I'm the same as everybody else."

This is the man, then, whose youth is described in the book "Ex-Prodigy." With the author's permission, here is a condensed version of the story the book tells—with some extra material he gave in conversation thrown in, and much fascinating material left out to meet space requirements.



THE story of Norbert Wiener really begins with his father, who to some degree, at least, was responsible for making his son a prodigy. The father, Leo Wiener, grew up in Poland. After an impoverished but brilliant scholastic career, during the course of which he abandoned the study of medicine because autopsies offended him, he and a friend tried to organize a vegetarian-humanitarian-socialist utopia in Central America. That dream didn't last long, and at the age of eighteen Leo Wiener found himself in New Orleans with only fifty cents in his pockets. His first job was in a factory where cotton was baled by an enormous machine. When a friend fell into the machine and was badly hurt, Leo Wiener quit. After working as a waterboy on a railroad, as a farmer, and many other things, he capitalized on his linguistic abilities and got into teaching. In 1894, when Norbert Wiener was born, his father was a professor of modern languages at the University of Missouri. Soon afterward, the father moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, and joined the Harvard staff, where he became a distinguished professor. He spoke about forty-six languages, not counting the various dialects of many of them. He was a vegetarian and an anti-vivisectionist. He hated killing anything for any reason. This then was the father of Norbert Wiener and, it could be said, an ancestor of the electronic brain.

The Wieners were Jews by heritage, but not in religion—they were Unitarians. Norbert was not brought up as a Jew, and didn't even know he was one until he reached adolescence. From infancy he was different from other children. He doesn't remember now when he began to talk, but at the age of eighteen months he learned the alphabet. He started to read at the age of three. Due to clumsiness, he had a terrible time learning to write, and in arithmetic classes he insisted on counting on his fingers long after the other children had stopped. He was slow in learning the multiplication tables and in memorizing anything. At the age of eleven he was an educational curiosity. He was reading more than the average adult scholar. He was in the fourth grade, had consumed countless scientific books, but was so confused by arithmetic that his father took him out of school and taught him algebra, which he thought might appeal more to his imagination.

That was the beginning of a strange, fruitful, but terrifying relationship between father and son. Wiener discusses all this in his autobiography without bitterness. That is one of the most extraordinary aspects of the book, for most people would have wound up hating such a father. The fact is that the senior Wiener bullied his son, shouted at him, occasionally struck him, and demanded an impossible level of performance. A weaker child undoubtedly would have collapsed under such treatment—but the boy wasn't weak. Looking back today, Wiener, with the scientist's concern for truth, does not gloss over the treatment he received from his father, but he understands the "intellectual passion," as he says, which caused it. "There was neither cruelty nor cheap ambition in anything my father did," he said recently.

When Wiener was eight years old, he relates in his book, his overworked eyes began giving him trouble, and a doctor ordered him to stop reading for six months. It was during this period, he believes, that he developed his remarkable memory and ability to do mathematics in his head. "During the next years," he writes in his autobiography, "without excessive difficulty, but with a severely lacerated self-esteem, I labored under my father's tutelage. . . ."

In 1903 his father bought a farm in the country about twenty miles outside Cambridge. A year later the boy at the age of nine entered the local public high school. The next year he was put into the senior class, and graduated the following June.

Wiener was not yet twelve years old when he was enrolled as a freshman in Tufts College near Boston. He arrived at Tufts literally dressed in short pants—he didn't get long trousers until he graduated. In his book he says, "I was not so much a mixture of child and man as wholly a child for purposes of companionship and nearly completely a man for purposes of study." His confusion was compounded by a strange fact which Wiener reports today without the slightest malice: his father said publicly that his son's success was due to the method of training, rather than any exceptional natural ability. He wrote magazine articles saying that. The boy had to shoulder the burdens of the great speed-up—but his father took the credit.

IT took Wiener only three years to go through Tufts, with full academic honors. It wasn't easy. At one time he got terribly disturbed about the amateur vivisection of a guinea pig in a biology laboratory. He was then, as he is now, a vegetarian, and that was one of many things which set him apart from his fellow students. His emotions were difficult to govern, and he was still physically clumsy. "I had not realized until now how much the three years at Tufts had taken out of me," he writes in his book. "I was exhausted, but I could not stop the wheels from going around, and I could not rest. I did not prosper physically. Every time I got a scratch I festered mildly, and I was in a continual low fever."

At the age of fourteen, Wiener entered Harvard as a graduate student. He was so clumsy that he was unable to do laboratory experiments. His handwriting was still so bad he couldn't take effective notes, but he

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didn't need to—his memory took care of that. He plunged through the most advanced courses in a variety of subjects, and got his doctor's degree at the age of eighteen.

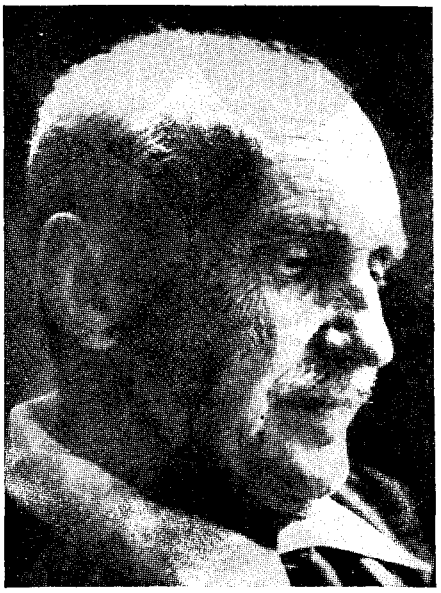
Then began a really hard period. He was much too young to get a job commensurate with his education. He floundered around, sometimes teaching, sometimes working as a hack journalist, sometimes unable to get any work at all. His trials were increased by the belated discovery that in spite of the fact that he had been brought up as a New England Unitarian, the world regarded him as a Jew, and he was subject to the full prejudices of a prejudiced era in New England. When World War I came, he was tormented by fears both of being killed and of killing, but finally tried to get a commission. He was turned down several times on the grounds that he wasn't proper officer material. Convinced that he still had a duty toward his country, he enlisted as a private shortly before the end of the war, and served several miserable months doing petty mathematical jobs for the Army. In 1919, at the age of twenty-four, he was honorably discharged, and got a job as an instructor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Soon afterward he married Margaret Engemann, who taught languages at Juniata College in Pennsylvania.

Wiener's autobiography ends at this point, but he makes a few exceptions to the time limitation he imposed on himself. The chief exception is his discussion of another prodigy named W. J. Sidis, and the difficulties Sidis had with the press in general and *The New Yorker* in particular.

The concern Wiener shows for Sidis in his autobiography obviously stems from his application of, "There but for the grace of God go I." In discussing Sidis with Wiener, it is necessary to remember that he still mourns Sidis's tragic life and death, and fiercely protects his memory. It is Wiener's attempts to preserve the dignity of Sidis's reputation which have led him to take up many of his old friend's battles.

Wiener met Sidis when the two of them were among five child prodigies studying at Harvard. Of the five, one died shortly after graduation, one was Adolf Berle, who became Under-Secretary of State for a while, and the third was Roger Sessions, who made a reputation as a composer. Even when he was at college, Sidis, who was two years younger than Wiener, was a tragic figure. His father, a psychiatrist, had given him the same sort of educational speed-up Wiener had

(*Continued on page* 34)



—*Press Association.*

George Santayana—"exquisite artist."

Continental Testament

MY HOST THE WORLD. By George Santayana. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 149 *pp.* $3.

By Brand Blanshard

IN the death last year of John Dewey at ninety-three and George Santayana at eighty-nine, America lost her two most distinguished philosophers. They were strangely different. Dewey was by instinct a democrat and a Plebeian; Santayana was an aristocrat. Dewey involved himself on every side in the life of his time, campaigned for political causes and educational reform, lived in an apartment on Broadway, and was accessible to everyone. Santayana was a recluse, whose only connection with the events around him was that of a detached observer. Dewey as a writer is so preoccupied with his matter as to be careless and fumbling in his manner; Santayana from first to last was an exquisite artist in words. Dewey remained a professor till age retired him; Santayana, on receiving a small legacy at thirty-nine, abandoned teaching with a sigh of relief. Dewey was an American, unmistakably and passionately; Santayana fled America at the first opportunity and, except for a brief visit of medical necessity, never for forty years set foot on American shores again.

"My Host the World" is the final instalment of his three-volume autobiography, which he called "Persons and Places." It is not, of course, a book of philosophy, but of rambling and ruminative memories. One chapter in it is devoted to his travels and reflections in Mediterranean countries, but by far the larger part is given to his life in England, where he spent about five years after his flight from America. There is no suggestion that the book was left unfinished at his death; indeed, it contains a formal "epilogue"; but the last quarter century of his life has been compressed into a few pages, as if the long years in the convent of the Blue Nuns at Rome had been too monotonous to be worth recording and the author had grown weary of his tale.

All, or nearly all, of the old fastidiousness of phrase and skill in delineation are still present in these pages. Scattered through the book there are many sketches, sharply done, of such memorable persons as Bertrand Russell, Lowes Dickinson, Lord Acton, Robert Bridges, and Lytton Strachey. Of Strachey, for example, "who was then youngish," he writes that he "looked like a caricature of Christ; a limp cadaverous creature, moving feebly, with lank long brown hair and the beginnings of a beard much paler in colour, and spasmodic treble murmurs of a voice utterly weary and contemptuous." By far the fullest single picture is of Lord Russell, Bertrand Russell's elder brother, the details consisting chiefly of his half-comic, half-pathetic attempts to get on with his various wives, successive and simultaneous.

The truth is that Santayana was a somewhat dangerous friend. With the sharpest of eyes for personal idiosyncrasy, he was as detached from his companions as an entomologist examining his beetles. Of the people around him he writes: "I sincerely wish them joy in their native ways of living, as if they were wild animals; but I decidedly refuse to hunt with them unless the probable result recommends itself to me independently. To heartlessness of this kind I am ready to plead guilty, and see clearly that it is inhuman." He admits that he was interested in his friends as specimens or types of character, examples of eternal "essences," which could be contemplated about equally well whether their bearers were alive or dead. There are some biographies, those of James and Johnson and Scott, for example, from which one rises not only with admiration for their subjects but with a very warm affection for them. Santayana awakes the admiration while leaving one's affections where they were, pre-

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Brand Blanshard, chairman of the philosophy department at Yale Univeristy, is on leave of absence to lecture at St. Andrews University in Scotland.

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sumably because he had so little to give himself. He would be a more satisfactory figure if there were evidence that he had ever put himself to serious inconvenience for anyone, or believed in any cause deeply enough to forget himself in it for a day.

But great men must be accepted with thanks as one finds them, and that Santayana was a great man I have no doubt. It is not merely that he had a pair of eyes that saw into men's minds with an uncanny penetration and an artist's power of portrayal; his character had extraordinary integrity and force. "The Life of Reason" would be a notable feat in any circumstances, but to produce a work of such Olympian sweep, with its defiant naturalism and its profound religious and moral skepticism, in the Harvard Yard of 1900 must have required a granite self-dependence. His patrician pride seems to have been fortified rather than weakened by his sense of being an alien, for he came to feel a strong distaste for the Puritanism, democracy, commercialism, and bustle of the American way of life.

Since he remained, wherever he went, the cool and alien observer, his observations are always interesting. One gets the impression from this book that the people he most admired were the English. Oddly enough, though a Latin, he disliked the French. "I have never had a French friend. In the most charming of them I felt something false, as if an evil spell bound them to some secret and sinister cause, and they were feigning all their amiability for an ulterior reason. They could never be disinterested, never detached." He much preferred Catholicism to Protestantism for the characteristic reason that Protestantism takes its religion too seriously while "Catholicism is paganism spiritualized." It is surprising, in view of his connoisseurship in the arts, to learn how little he cared for music. Even in philosophy his tastes were limited and definitely his own. His manner of writing was not well fitted for the exact and logic-chopping analysis of the newer modes of philosophizing; very well, he could pass them by rather than modify his highly individual style.

The most heartening passages in this book are not those concerned with the outlook of the race, which are disillusioned in the extreme, but those that occur in the brief chapter on "Old Age in Italy." His old age may have been monotonous, but there was no repining about it; quite the opposite. "Never have I enjoyed youth so thoroughly as I have in my old age," he writes.

Vision of the Unseeing

LOVE IS NOT BLIND. By Russell Criddle. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 272 pp. $3.50.

By Hector Chevigny

EACH year three to four autobiographies by blind people get published. Mostly they are titled with some variant of the phrases "Up from Darkness" or "Into Light" and are supposed to inspire other blind people, who seldom read them, and to give the sighted world a new grip on what the human spirit is capable of. To most of this branch of literature, "Love Is Not Blind," by a Pennsylvania farmer named Russell Criddle, has little relationship. Few welfare workers are likely to recommend it to their newly-blinded clients. But if this probability has kept the publisher at his prayer-wheel since acquiring the manuscript, he can forget it. This book is to most of the trash in the field as the Washington monument is to a Siberian yurt. It is not the great book that can be written about life under conditions that classify one as blind, but it will do until that great book comes along.

Mr. Criddle was living in a smallish town near the New York-Pennsylvania border when, at the age of twelve, an accident with a snowball left him with just enough vision to get him classed as legally blind. Vision under that classification can be considerable, allowing for safe travel, and even reading at close range; but as Mr. Criddle found out, life got to be a battle with ideas invested with deep emotional meaning, the conquest of which comes about only upon an understanding of the content of those ideas.

In manhood Mr. Criddle reacquired sight through corneal transplant. Because of the great and understandable curiosity as to how it feels to regain one's sight this element in the story—and the fact he lost his sight again—will probably be stressed as the focus of the book. It is not and, as Mr. Criddle realized, the real story lies in the events that gave regaining sight meaning. Through boyhood, adolescence, and manhood he struggled for normality amid people who refused to concede it to him. His good deeds were overestimated, mischief into which he got was construed as evil-doing. As Criddle's high-school principal put it, "Society will not tolerate normality from you; you will either have to be nearly perfect or completely bad."

A wise mother insisted he be allowed to continue belonging to the neighborhood gang, go swimming with them, carry a paper-route, go to public school. Well-meaning busybodies sought to prevent the parents from showing such heartlessness, giving as their only logic their own unfounded fears. There are brutal episodes such as the high-school bully who undertook to bloody Criddle's knuckles with an iron-edged ruler in an endeavor to show the blind do not feel pain as most people do.

Only those who reject this book out of their own inward need to believe something different will say the author is somebody with a chip on his shoulder. It is, however, true that he could have done with a little humor. Simplicity keynotes the work literally. It is rough-hewn, as if fashioned with ax and crosscut. Characters emerge clearly and vividly, the incidents are treated with dramatic economy. Critics will also say that, Mr. Criddle being Mr. Criddle, he would have had a tough boyhood and adolescence even with perfect vision. There will be truth in this. All boys wonder wretchedly if the world will ever give them the breaks, if the girls they desire will ever really like them. But, as Mr. Criddle points out, it is not so much that handicap creates new situations, rather it underscores and highlights problems common to all.

If this is not that great book the subject can provide, it is for the reason the author constantly formulates the reader's judgments for him instead of allowing those judgments to come as emotional discoveries through skilful presentation of the facts dramatically. And though the author gives the impression he has achieved tranquility and is satisfied with his judgments, it is plain he is still often baffled. He does not realize, for example, that part of his inward conflict has been due to a capacity for social adaptation not quite up to his capacity for physical adaptation to his condition.

This is a valuable social tract and, what is perhaps more important, a fascinating human document. Nobody, not even among those who most forcibly will wish to reject its thesis, will be able to lay the book down, once past the opening chapter.

Hector Chevigny is co-author of "Adjustment of the Blind" and author of an autobiography, "My Eyes Have a Cold Nose," and several novels including "Lost Empire" and "Woman of the Rock."

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Paternal Apologia

MY DEAR TIMOTHY: An Autobiographical Letter to His Grandson. By Victor Gollancz. New York: Simon & Schuster. 439 *pp.* $5.

By Ludwig Lewisohn

THE well-known British publisher and, let us say, humanitarian, a fairly noncommital word, here offers his autobiographical outpourings, deliberately and whimsically, without beginning, middle, or end. Mr. Gollancz is by turns jaunty, cozy, complacent. At times he is so painfully frank that, as a British reviewer observed, he makes the reader feel like a *voyeur.* Nevertheless, the themes of his longish volume are disengaged without difficulty. The major ones are religion and Socialism, the minor ones vegetarianism, music, the glories of Oxford.

Mr. Gollancz's ethnic and religious background was that of a moderately orthodox Judaism. Rebellion against that belonged, it is fair to say, to his time and historic position. But he devotes more than one hundred pages to this process of withdrawal and most of those pages are oddly querulous and oddly ambivalent. He betrays insight into classical Judaism, alternating with a grotesque ignorance of the simplest terms. But exculpatory goings on are always devious. And it was, given all the circumstances, psychologically necessary for Mr. Gollancz to represent the voluntary self-discipline of obedience to the Mosaic Law as a kind of tyranny from without, since it has been to him a lifelong obsession. He is a recusant, an extreme Socialist, almost a Christian, and confesses that, to this day, he cannot eat the forbidden foods, cannot even butter his sandwich, if it is a meat sandwich, and becomes highly irritable when those foods (swine's flesh, shell fish) are eaten in his presence. He is, he supposes, "a Jew at heart"—whatever that may mean—and loves to have mezuzoth (capsules with quotations from the Law) on the doors of his house.

This violent and ambivalent representation of Judaism—both a foul tyranny and "a uniquely beautiful manifestation of the religious genius"—paints the man and his book. He wants badly to be a vegetarian and describes the wonderful French meals which he and his wife enjoy. He adores Oxford, as why should he not? As a leftist Laborite he wants it proletarized *and* preserved as it is, too. He wants the widest dissemination of culture plus elite standards. His whole world is a cake which he wants both to eat and to have left. He assents to the ethics of Christianity; again, why should he not? Indeed, who does not? —and has never been at the small pains necessary to discover that the ethics of Christianity are 95 per cent Pentateuchal in origin.

His Socialism represents him most fully. He wants an economically egalitarian society. He wants terribly to mean just that. He does not mean egalitarian in opportunity and access to justice. He wants complete equalization of income—from the ditch-digger to himself, ensconced at the moment in a small fashionable New York hotel during his annual trip to America to examine books and manuscripts for his distinguished publishing house. In other words, discrepancies in the necessary world of experience trouble him no whit. Sincerely from the heart he means everything and nothing. A massive guilt-feeling, quite as defined by psychiatrists, obsesses him. To allay it he overflows with indiscriminate kindness. But the kindness must indeed be unguided by any law, outer reality, or moral fact. The grave problems of Socialism don't even impinge on him. If all is under the control of the totality, that is, of the State, that is, of a bureaucracy—what prevents the printing presses from being taken over? He thinks he loves freedom and dreams of its destruction. He adores Christ but is in reality no Christian; he hates Judaism but has to eat *kosher* food. The emotional dilemmas of his twenties, stagnant at that point, have ruled his life.

The popular fallacies of thirty and forty years ago are his frail staff. "Patterns of culture, however they may have arisen, condition people." So, change the patterns, and all will be well. We have seen what comes of that. The catch is, of course, in that cavalier "however they may have arisen." They didn't just arise. They were created from the deepest monitions of the human group which lives by them. They were shaped in the image of some ethnic and spiritual demand. How can we change society, Berdyaev agonizedly asked long ago, if we descend to no deeper sources than society itself? Mr. Gollancz and not a few of his contemporaries will furnish the documentation of a group and an age which had good will—the best will in the world—but neither intellectual scruples nor any deep sense of reality. Good will is not enough.

Ludwig Lewisohn, novelist and critic, is a member of the faculty of Brandeis University.

Circles in the Turf

PROFILE OF A CHARACTER: "The pleasures of the Gambrinian and a ride on the magic carpet can not be indulged in by a man who is non-holding, or without Tease." Such an aphorism, which means, roughly, "Getting tight is out of the question for a man who is broke," might well have been spoken or written by Mr. J. A. S. MacDonald, alias Colonel John R. Stingo, the extraordinary subject of A. J. Liebling's newest book, **"The Honest Rainmaker"** (Doubleday, 3.50). For the Colonel, who is at present the turf columnist of New York's only Sunday afternoon newspaper, *The Enquirer,* has spent a long and madcap life trying, often in vain, to avoid the non-holding state.

He has been at various periods, since his birth in New Orleans in 1874, a sportswriter, a rainmaker, a rain preventer, a promoter of hogs, the friend of Al Jennings the great train robber, a revivalist, a fight manager, and a lifelong non-betting devotee and interpreter of the many facets of American racetrack culture. Over the years he has become the master of an idiom which has elements in it of the best of Mrs. Malaprop, W. C. Fields, Mark Twain, and Hugh G. Flood, flavored with a kind of giddy Faulknerian rhetoric. Mr. Liebling, who is himself fond of a choice phrase and the possibilities of such words as "eremite" and "pantling," has allowed the Colonel to do a good deal of the talking and writing in the book; in fact, there are several occasions where he becomes so entranced by the Colonel's divine inflatus, or narrative skill, that the Colonel turns into nothing more than a quaint and somewhat long-winded relic. If memory serves, the two articles from the book which appeared in *The New Yorker* last year in a more trim and organized shape were much funnier because they gave a gentle sufficiency.

—W. G. Fargo.

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Three Portraits of the Negro

ARNA BONTEMPS

RICHARD WRIGHT'S boisterous new novel, "The Outsider"* arrives like a band of brigands from the hills with horses snorting, guns blazing, bent on shooting up the town. It will be difficult to sleep through this new assault on our nerves. Considered along with two books by new writers,—Walter B. Lowrey's "Watch Night,"** and William Fisher's "The Waiters"***—Mr. Wright's novel also reopens the intriguing and often disputed question of the Negro's place in contemporary American fiction.

In the past, of course, the central problem has been the stereotype, and perhaps it is wrong to place too much blame on the creative writer for the more or less standard portrayals of Negroes. We now know that there are minds that need such stereotypes for their comfort, that the root of the matter is a national attitude and that the recurrence of these over-simplified types cannot be honestly accounted for without reference to the sociological environment in which they exist.

In these terms it is possible to trace a sort of evolution of stereotypes. One recalls the shiftless, improvident, and musical predecessors of the slum-shocked Depression folk. New phantoms glide in as the older ones glide out, and the otherwise serious reader is consoled without being convinced. Thus it was, no doubt, that the latest racial stereotype of the Negro as problem emerged.

This was the prevailing attitude when Ralph Ellison's "Invisible Man" appeared last year. It is the dominant one this year as Wright's first novel since "Native Son" and the new novels by Fisher and Lowrey come up for attention.

When "Native Son" was published in 1940, Richard Wright was given the acclaim usually reserved for writers of major importance. Thousands of readers were shocked speechless by it, and most of them had not completely recovered five years later when "Black Boy" was published. By this time Wright's position in the ranks of American writers seemed clear. That his was the most impressive literary talent yet produced by Negro America was only rarely disputed. Interest in him as a personality was widespread.

The fact that he was largely self-educated and that he sprang from the sharecropping element in Mississippi served to point up the sharpness of his insights, the restlessness of his mind. While much of his strength was in his narrative power, much more was in the freshness of his vision, his daring exploration of a more or less taboo subject matter. Readers detected a correlation between his own odyssey and the world of fiction and semi-fiction which he created.

His first book, for example, "Uncle Tom's Children," reflected his discovery of Communism and his application of this dogma to the struggles of a sensitive migrant boy newly arrived in Chicago's black belt. "Native Son" came next, and again the writer's frame of reference was Communism: but equally apparent here was his preoccupation with another discipline quite new to him, sociology. "Black Boy" was written while Wright was learning about psychoanalysis and reflects an awakened interest in the subconscious roots of personality.

"The Outsider," his first book in eight years, and his first novel in thirteen, has now appeared, and almost the first observation one can make of it is that the black boy from Mississippi is still exploring. He has had a roll in the hay with the existentialism of Sartre, and apparently he liked it. Wright went to France with his family in 1948. This would have been true to form for almost any American writer, ready to enjoy the fruits of two best sellers in a row. For the boy who had not been allowed to draw books from the main public library in Memphis, it was more than understandable.

But what would it do to him as a writer, some asked. Certainly the works on which his reputation was based had been sparked by anger.

Richard Wright—"roll in the hay."

Walter Lowrey—"sound qualities."

William Fisher—"raw material."

*THE OUTSIDER. By Richard Wright. New York: Harper & Bros. 405 pp. $3.95.

**WATCH NIGHT. By Walter B. Lowrey. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 269 pp. $3.50.

***THE WAITERS. By William Fisher. Cleveland: The World Publishing Co. 295 pp. $3.75.

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anger at indignities and racial discrimination. Would Wright be able to write at all away from the conditions that riled him? Months and years passed with no word from Wright. Nelson Algren charged him with powdering-out on his old stamping grounds, and Wright admitted to someone that he had café-itis. He was sitting and enjoying himself. He was reading and thinking. If he was writing, he was not telling anyone about it. And if this was the whole story, who could blame him?

Oddly enough, however, Richard Wright has gone back to the Chicago of his earlier books for the people and the situations of the novel he was writing meanwhile. Cross Damon is a postal clerk with a college education. Nervous, disturbed, drinking too much—even in the opinion of his hearty, non-critical buddies—he carries on his mind a problem which he cannot share. It is this problem which Wright, the good storyteller, sets out to unravel, and knowing Wright, one soon suspects that he knows where it is going. But one is mistaken.

Cross Damon's problem has nothing to do with color. This may surprise those who have been led to believe that all Negroes on the south side of Chicago eat, sleep, and breathe racial thoughts. Cross's difficulty is much older and even more puzzling. Its name is woman.

A more hag-ridden young man than the fretting and sweating hero of "The Outsider" is hard to imagine. His wife, mother, and sweetheart are closing in on him as the story opens. While refusing to divorce him, the wife from whom he is separated increases her demands beyond all conscience. The mother pounds at him for his drinking and wenching and his neglect of her. The sweetheart, whom he has gotten in trouble, reveals that she is two years younger than he had known and that makes him guilty of statutory rape in Illinois; she can send him to prison. Hopelessly trapped, Cross yields to his wife's blackmail and borrows $800 against his salary. He has boarded the subway with the cash in his pocket when his deliverance comes: a hideous wreck.

When he drags himself out of the mess of glass and steel and makes his way to the platform, nurses, doctors, and crowds of people are waiting. But Cross is all right. He can walk to the ambulance. The attention of the bystanders shifts back to the broken bodies still being rescued, and Cross remembers that he has left his overcoat in the wreckage. Well, never mind. And never mind about that ambulance. His leg is not hurt badly. When he sees his overcoat covering a stretcher on which a hopelessly mangled body is carried, he doesn't bother. He heads for a restaurant. He is at a table waiting for his order when the radio bulletins begin to come over the air. Soon the announcer is naming victims. Cross hears his own name called. That gives him the notion that is crucial to Wright's story. He will play dead. He will run away, take a new name, make a new life.

The second half of the novel is the author's account of this strange flight by a man whose furies are many. Almost immediately Cross starts killing through fear, and a string of murders dot his trail thereafter. He meets a Communist and decides to join the Party as a means of giving himself some sort of identity, though he has no interest in its aims. He finds love as he rushes feverishly, but by then the end is clear. He can neither escape from himself nor from the society in which he lives.

Richard Wright's mind has always run to melodrama, and in "The Outsider" it does just that, but with him melodrama is a device rather than an end. His real concern is with such matters as his hero's awareness of "his body as an alien and despised object over which he had no power, a burden that was always cheating him of the fruits of his thoughts," with his version of the time-honored debate between body and soul, with "woman as body of woman," with guilt, with fear, and with the havoc that can follow them. Cross's dilemma in his story is that "each act of his consciousness sought to drag him back to what he wanted to flee." As Wright tells it, "The Outsider" makes gripping reading.

Neither Mr. Lowrey's "Watch Night" nor Mr. Fisher's "The Waiters" attempts so much, though each has sound qualities of its own. In a very different way "Watch Night" also employs an unusual constructional device. The whole story runs through the mind of its leading character as he awaits the electric chair, following conviction for rape in Mississippi. He is an educated Negro, back from military service and visiting with his parents and their "white folks" when it happens. White authors from the South have not often used educated Negroes as fictional characters, even in death-sentence situations. Lowrey's first novel shows that it can be done honestly and with insight.

"The Waiters" is more interesting as raw material than as fiction, though the book moves and has much to say. It follows the career of Asher Brown, waiter, whose world is the Fishbowl, a huge sea-food restaurant located on City Island, and Fisher's novel is informed with an arresting view of life from that bustling spot. The occupation of the waiter is far from dull. It has its own special lore, its own values, and the climb to the top rung of the ladder can be rugged, even dangerous.

Negro butlers, porters, waiters, and other service workers are familiar figures in fiction. At times they have been victims of some of the most outlandish stereotypes. "The Waiters" takes these people seriously. Perhaps that is the needed corrective.

New Fiction

Described below are recently published volumes which we do not have space to review this week. In many instances we hope to give them more extended discussion in forthcoming numbers.

ALL THE YOUNG SUMMER DAYS. By Bernice Kavinoky. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. $3. The winner of the Hopwood Awards for poetry and drama tries her hand at fiction as she pictures the turmoil resulting from a marriage prompted by remorse.

BLANKET BOY. By Peter Lanham and A. S. Mopeli-Paulus. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. $3.50. This novel is based on an original story by a chieftain of South Africa's Basutoland, Mopeli-Paulus. At the center of events is Monare who is caught in the contentious hands of various religionists intent on his soul's salvation.

CAPTAIN ADAM. By Donald Barr Chidsey. New York: Crown Publishers. $3. A seventeenth-century Newport captain makes off with a schooner, takes an adventurous lady aboard, runs into pirates, tracks down a kidnapping ring, and otherwise leads a full life.

CRIMSON IS THE EASTERN SHORE. By Don Tracy. New York: Dial Press. $3.50. Maryland during the War of 1812 becomes the seat of a novel by the author of "Chesapeake Cavalier" that revolves about Anthony Worth's dread secret in the family closet.

A FIDDLE, A SWORD AND A LADY. By Albert Spalding. New York: Henry Holt & Co. $3.95. From distinguished fiddling to fiction is a switch in vocation here made by Mr. Spalding. His first novel tells the romantic story of the eighteenth-century Italian violinist Tartini.

THE HOUR AWAITS. By March Cost. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. $3.50. A romantic fable about Princess Elizabeth who has twenty-four hours in London to contact her English relatives in an effort to save the fortunes of her family in the Tyrol.

IN THE MINK. By Anne Scott-James. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. $3. The fashion industry described in fictional terms by an English editor in the know.

THE RIVER IS HOME. By Pat Smith. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. $3. Love, feuding, and fishing are part of Skeeter Corey's life among the Mississippi bayous.

THE SMOLDERING SEA. By U. S. Andersen. New York: A. A. Wyn. $3.50. Based on wartime experience, this first novel deals with a merchant marine crew possessed by a variety of psychiatric ills.

STAY AWAY, JOE. By Dan Cushman. New York: The Viking Press. $3. A government-donated cattle herd sets a French-Canadian family in Montana on a series of comedy adventures that affect both herd and family. —S. M.

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The Ageless Promotion

A HOUSE OF HER OWN. By Robert F. Mirvish. New York: William Sloane Assoc. 312 pp. $3.50.

By Charles Lee

HERE is a book that will win a certain amount of notoriety simply because its setting is a brothel and its heroine a prostitute. One may expect both the puritanical and the prurient to pounce upon it for their different reasons, but they are doomed to disappointment. "A House of Her Own" is obviously not a book for the delicate reader, but it is not pornographic, or even sensational; its subject may seem deplorable, but it is not without its human and sociological interest.

The Hotel Internacional, largest and best of its sort in Los Cielos, Venezuela, is distinguished for several reasons: its excellent bar, its powder blue walls with their Indian-style murals, its skilled and comely personnel, and especially, its efficient manager, Bonita. Had she been a man, Bonita might have operated one of the local oil refineries; she has the necessary acquisitiveness, cunning, and discipline. But she is content to preside over what might be called one of their subsidiary establishments, and this she does with a merciless sense of justice. At thirty-seven her two long braids are still black; her teeth are gold-edged; all is in order with her purse, her pocketbook, and the police chief. Her executive record extends over a period of twenty-three years.

It is in Margo, her best girl, that Bonita is mildly interested as the book opens, for Margo has ambitions to become an executive in her own right. A sensualist, well aware of the dangers and peculiar rewards of her profession, Margo believes that she is secure in herself, that she will succeed in saving the necessary money, and eventually purify herself by attending mass at St. Peter's in Rome. Bonita's doubts of Margo's business stamina are answered by her own brand of hardness and determination, for the dream of "a house of her own" has been at the bottom of her exertions for seventeen dedicated years.

And then along comes Shane O'Brien, an American sailor, who rouses in her a non-commercial infatuation that threatens her every hope. In the grip of her overwhelming appetite, Margo hopes to win the security of love, banking on her voluptuous body and its obsessively roused needs to reduce him to a permanent dependency on herself. But Shane is already promised to the sea, and no more to be tamed than a hurricane. Their contest, inflamed, torturing, and erosive, provides the central action of the book.

While Bonita watches this conflict with a sardonic interest in its relationship to her own prosperity, and while Ricardo, an obese American drifter, watches it for special reasons of his own, the reader is initiated into the peculiar human and economic aspects of prostitution as a business. Mr. Mirvish makes no profound inquiry into the psychological and environmental forces that produce prostitution; what comments he makes are incidental to his swift characterizations and realistic storytelling, but they are true and telling. He rouses disgust but he also stirs the heart; he implies the need for social correctives and individual compassions.

In short, moral concern underlies the violence and spiritual degradation of this very physical and frequently ironical book, but it remains basically a story, and a commendable achievement for a first novel.

The Art of a Crew

FAR FROM THE CUSTOMARY SKIES. By Warren Eyster. New York: Random House. 372 pp. $3.75.

By Merle Miller

WARREN EYSTER knows a lot about the U.S. Navy and about the war it fought in the Pacific against the Japanese. He can describe the feel of the relentless sun, the sudden coolness of rain, and the terror of an ocean storm. He knows the look of an enemy artillery shell in mid-air, the sound of a falling bomb, and the scream of a dying man. He realizes that comradeship can fester into hatred and that there is not really much difference between a coward and a hero.

He knows all that, and he remembers, and he has put a good deal both of his knowledge and his memory into his first novel, which concerns the lives of men on the imaginary USS *Dreher* from the time they boarded her until, two years later, she is sunk.

At times, Mr. Eyster's novel threatens to become great; on occasions, it is extremely good; unhappily, after 372 closely-printed pages with events enough for a book three times its size, "Far from the Customary Skies" turns out to be undeniably dull.

The reason is simple. Mr. Eyster is a fine reporter of technical detail and, for that matter, of feeling. For instance, in addition to understanding the sea he can picture the firing of a five-inch gun with the precision of a training manual. But he has not created a single believable or even very interesting human being. His book is populated by shadows, not people, and, while we are introduced to a sizable part of the crew of the *Dreher*, we never really get to know anybody. We are *told* a lot about the crew members, but we are not, as a fine editor has rightly insisted must be done in a good novel, *shown* anything about anybody.

Even now, five years after they first appeared, Hearn and Croft and Goldstein are remembered from "The Naked and the Dead," and no one who has read about them is likely to forget Prewitt or Sergeant Warden or Maggio of "From Here to Eternity." Although he was something of a fool, Willie Keith is memorable enough, as certainly is Captain Queeg in "The Caine Mutiny."

What's more, in addition to their

Merle Miller is the author of "That Winter" and "The Sure Thing."

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being populated by believable people, the novels of Mailer, Jones, and Wouk have that other essential of good fiction, narrative power.

"Far from the Customary Skies" is easy to lay aside. It never seems to move forward; it only grinds. What's more, it is often extremely tiring to read, partly because Mr. Eyster has a fondness for sentences that are as backward and sometimes as pretentious as those that often sprinkle the pages of *Time* magazine. "Ahead," writes Mr. Eyster, "lay Guadalcanal and Tulagi." "This then," he continues, "was the Solomon Islands."

His novel has almost all of the characters we have come to expect in a novel concerned with the Second World War. There is the boy from Brooklyn; he dies. There is the frustrated college man who made an unfortunate marriage; he dies. There is the gentle, ambitious, small-town (and/or farm) boy; he dies. There is the wisecracking gambler, the good-guy lieutenant, the bad-guy, and others equally familiar, including Malone, the excessively competent and unbelievably brave Malone who is also a brute and a cad.

However, there are three completely brilliant passages, one about eleven men given the job of cutting loose from a Jap-held island the drums used for fixed artillery ranges, a second describing the change of morale on the *Dreher* when the men go stale, a third, much shorter, almost too-abrupt account of the sinking.

Mr. Eyster is a first-rate naval historian; he is not yet a good novelist.

Saga of the Daubneys

THE GREEN MAN. By Storm Jameson. New York: Harper & Bros. 762 pp. $3.95.

By Harvey Curtis Webster

IT is possible to call Storm Jameson's "The Green Man" a sensational novel. Matthew Daubney, one of the chief characters, cannot go to sleep at night unless he has used a woman as a sedative. His son, Mark, is a traitor who hates Jews and approves oligarchs. Matthew's illegitimate daughter, Liz, does a lot she shouldn't before she dies in an automobile accident. What may be called a scandalous interest is added by the inclusion of supporting characters that suggest Auden, Bevan, Orwell, and a good many notable Englishmen of our time.

It is impossible to call Storm Jameson's "The Green Man" a sensational novel accurately. Those who have read her admirable "Europe to Let" and "Cloudless May," to mention only two of her twenty-seven good books, know she writes both seriously and well. Though Miss Jameson is neither a fashionable nor a tremendously popular novelist, she has always preserved her integrity and constantly improved her craftsmanship. She writes to illuminate, not to accumulate.

"The Green Man" is a novel in the tradition of Galsworthy and Bennett. Mainly it is about the Daubneys—Matthew, Richard, and Andrew—their descendants, and friends. It is a family chronicle and a history of the Thirties and Forties. It is also, and more significantly, a mature exploration of one of the central problems of our times: Can the tradition of materialism live compatibly with the tradition that claims right is not might?

The novel's most sympathetic and deeply probed character, Richard Daubney, is an anarchist-idealist. He believes in both people and the people, yet he wants to preserve the older way of living well in one place rather than the newer way of living conspicuously wherever wealth and virtue are equated. He is constantly in conflict with his brother, Matthew, who thinks nothing matters as much as the corporations that should control the nation and considers the people pawns to be manipulated without humane consideration. As one might expect in a realistic novel about the past two decades, Matthew rises and Richard falls. As one might not expect in a novel primarily driving for popularity, Richard, the failure, and those who are like him, seem admirable while Matthew and those who succeed with him seem despicable—though understandable.

Miss Jameson knows her period and her characters. She makes vivid the intellectuals who dramatized the hoping despair of the Marxist Thirties and the proud hopelessness of the Age of Anxiety. Without anger, softness, or sentimentality, she portrays the desperate, the crass, the naive. Mark Daubney, a promising boy made into a Nazi by his sense of guilt, Andrew Daubney, who preferred the simple life to the intellectual and material life his pathetic and brilliant wife preferred, and Troy, the servant of good will and inexorable bluntness, are as memorable as the Forsytes.

The publishers speak of the novel as though it belongs with the books of Howard Spring and Frank Swinnerton, as though it were mainly distinguished by an exciting crowd of incidents. This it is (though not mainly), and I hope the popular elements in "The Green Man" help it to a wide circulation. But Miss Jameson's novel probes deeply and compromises not at all. Strangest and most heartening of all, without being modishly deprecating about those who despaired

(*Continued on page 32*)

Harvey Curtis Webster, a member of the English department of the University of Louisville, has written widely on the modern English novel.

The Poet & the Robin

(Seen together on a garden lawn)

By Eric Wilson Barker

THEIR stance breeds silence like a sultry cloud
That all the rain-expectant leaves obey.
A listening attitude enhancing quiet
Like stilted herons in a shallow bay.

Nature provides them with such appetites
That worms will satisfy, or the bronzy sound
Of katydids a branch above the ground.

The cocked heads flow through shadows like a stream.
Oh, they are still as stones. In such a calm
Stood Jericho before the walls rushed down.
A sleeping king from such a garden dream
Was sent to haunt the nights of Elsinore.

The silk of silence straitens to extreme—

A stirring in the grass would set them free,
A red leaf falling from a burning tree.

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Music. Considering the essential role he plays, surprisingly little has been written—in books, at least—on that fascinating re-creative "middleman," the musical performer, who forms a vital link in the chain connecting composer and listener. In "Music-Makers" (reviewed below) *SR*'s Roland Gelatt considers twenty-one outstanding musical performers of our time and analyzes the special contribution which each has made to the developing art of music. Recently, another link in the musical chain has come to the fore and assumed great importance: the high-fidelity phonograph. Several books are now available which serve to guide the prospective buyer of high-fidelity equipment in the strange electronic world of "all-triode circuits," "pre-amplification," and "horn-loading." The latest to appear is Edward Tatnall Canby's "Home Music Systems" (reviewed on page 20). Also reviewed this week are James Husst Hall's "The Art Song," which ranges from early Italian airs to the lastest offering of Francis Poulenc, and an examination of Mozart's years in Salzburg by Max Kenyon (page 21).

Larynx, Bow & Pedal

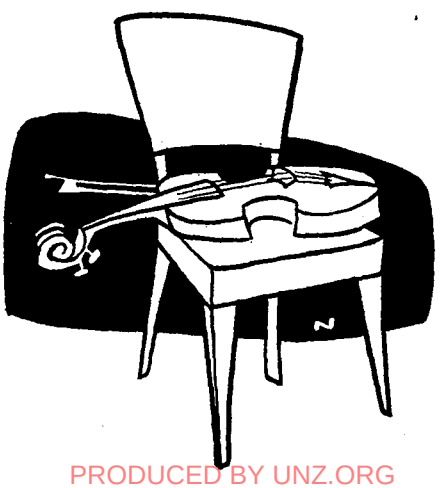
MUSIC-MAKERS. By Roland Gelatt. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 286 pp. $3.75.

By Irwin Edman

"WE are the music-makers," wrote the nineteenth-century Irish poet, Edgar Allen O'Shaughnessy. "We are the dreamers of the dreams." He was, of course, referring to poets and not composers. The title of Mr. Gelatt's book reminds us that in an important sense, the term music-makers may mean what it literally says, those who by voice or instrument (including orchestra) make music. To the listener it is the performer who makes music and makes it available. One can even argue the position that the musical climate of a period is formed by its performers. What they play and how they play it in large measure determines the course of cultivated taste in an era. The same composer is not the same in different hands; the Beethoven of Horowitz is not the same as that of Paderewski, and Sibelius is appreciated because Koussevitzky repeatedly played him.

Mr. Gelatt has performed an important and amiable service in placing before the reader what he needs to know about the musical personalities who dominate the performing scene in contemporary music. I say *musical* personalities advisedly, for Mr. Gelatt deals with the personal idiosyncrasies and the private lives of the performers under consideration only insofar as these affect the individual as a musician. This volume is not a collection of blurbs, nor a gossip column in covers. It is a book about musicians and what goes into the performances the public listens to and in varying degrees enjoys.

Mr. Gelatt writes with affection, never too uncritical; he is informed about the particular characters he studies. Above all he is interested in the art of music and has standards in the light of which he considers his subjects. He admires but is not bemused by Toscanini and he distinguishes that maestro's actual virtues from the pious legends. He tells us about the virtuosity of Segovia, and makes us aware of what that artist has done with the guitar as an instrument of serious music, but Mr. Gelatt makes disarmingly clear that a whole concert of guitar music even at the hands of Segovia is too much for him. Mr. Gelatt has a gift (despite an occasional lapse into the rubber stamps of musical journalism) of evoking clearly and contagiously the style, the tempo, the rhythm, the special tonality of each musician he deals with; singers as different from each other as Pierre Bernac and Flagstad, conductors as diverse as Bruno Walter and Sir Thomas Beecham. He has given us in an easy and readable fashion a vivacious and enlightening survey of those who may be described as crucial in the music-making world of our period. Among conductors there are Toscanini, Walter, Mitropoulos, Ansermet, Munch; among pianists, Gieseking, Myra Hess, Rubinstein. There is Landowska, who is responsible in no small measure not only for the revival of the harpsichord but of Bach in our time; Szigeti, Pablo Casals, the Budapest String Quartet, and Reginald Kell are some of the other instrumentalists he discusses. And there is a fine retrospective chapter on Lotte Lehmann.



Mr. Gelatt would probably be the last to insist that this selection is definitive or that any generalizations made from these persons would not be modified if he had chosen other subjects. But no one could claim for anyone considered in this book anything less than major status. Nor for all Mr. Gelatt's modest eschewing grandiose conclusions can one avoid noting that there are certain interesting and important morals to be drawn. The virtuoso for virtuosity's sake, or for the sake of bedazzlement of the audience, has on the whole vanished. Szigeti is a musician rather than, for all his virtuosity, a dazzling fiddler. He is a musician whose instrument is the violin. Casals, too, earns a tribute for a dedication to the art of music that is only matched by his dedication to human freedom. Those nearest to "pure" virtuosity, it is interesting to observe, stand in these pages as the most irresponsible or the most naïve about human responsibility in the larger sense; *e. g.*, concerning Gieseking and Flagstad, Mr. Gelatt handles with delicacy and firmness their defects as citizens as over against their talents as musicians. The most serious artists seem to be those whose culture is not all in their finger tips or in their larynx. The most profound music is made, it would appear, not by those who know only their *musical* business, but by those who are themselves profound spirits. Ansermet and Casals are great musicians partly because they are great men, and errors of taste turn out often to be limitations of moral perception, and depths of effect, as in Landowska, a function of a wide human culture. These and many other reflections are prompted by this humane and musicianly book about musicians.

Irwin Edman is Johnsonian professor of philosophy at Columbia University and the author of "Philosopher's Quest," "Arts and the Man," and other books.

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Bach in Slippers

HOME MUSIC SYSTEMS. By Edward Tatnall Canby. New York: Harper & Bros. 300 pp. $3.95.

By R. D. DARRELL

FOR ONCE the jacket caption is more accurate than the book's actual subtitle. While the latter falsely promises "building" instructions, the former correctly describes these pages as telling "how to assemble and enjoy high fidelity equipment at tremendous savings." Even the last phrase is no hyperbole, and although audio specialists will resent the undue stretching of that elastic term, "high fidelity," its use throughout the book at least has the benign sanction of current popular usage.

The prime characteristic, indeed, of this handbook is that it is precisely keyed to a contemporary lay public: today's home listeners to records and broadcasts. It talks with—not down to—them in readily comprehensible language and it painstakingly answers almost every question they are likely to raise before they start, and as they proceed, on their rocky pilgrimages toward the mecca of better sound reproduction.

The author is peculiarly qualified to serve as evangelist-guide. An amateur (in engineering, at least) himself, he has spent years assembling and listening to home music systems with an unflagging curiosity and even passion, which, fanatical as they may seem to the uninitiate, are the distinctive traits of the "sound" cultist. His record-review columns (*Saturday Review* 1939-1952, currently in *Harper's*, and—in more technical vein—in *Audio Engineering* since 1947) and "New Recordings" broadcasts chart his own audio-pilgrim's progress. But more than that, they have been a pioneering influence in the phenomenal growth of public interest in so-called "high-fidelity" music reproduction and a means of responsive contact with a large following infected by the contagion of burning enthusiasm.

Happily, he has profited notably both by his own experiences and those of his correspondents. Curbing many of his former ebullient tendencies, he has become somewhat more cautious and much more thorough and systematic. Here he patiently leads even the most technically obtuse reader through an explanation of sound systems that, although highly simplified, still makes sense. Component by component, he specifies the essentials of such systems, describes the variety of form and function each may assume, and indicates the significant bases of choice among them—always as qualified by an individual user's particular wants, needs, and resources. He gives names and prices, lists specialist dealers, and provides a wealth of helpful advice on recognizing and avoiding the pitfalls that beset a novice's nervous exploration of "performance ratings," mail order catalogues, the pandemonium of "demonstration" salons, the utility-vs.-appearance conflict in living-room installations, and even the generally soft-pedaled problem of proper maintenance.

—*Robert Galster.*

Edward Tatnall Canby—"evangelist-guide."

In short, Mr. Canby's handbook is admirably informative, practical, and complete. Moreover, it is well illustrated, printed, and indexed. For most of its readers it surely will be esteemed as an indispensable guide, if not a near "sound" bible.

Nevertheless, and possibly from partisan prejudice, I can praise it only on its deliberately chosen level of sheer pragmatism. Of course any "how-to" book should be colloquial in style—but must it be so sloppily written? Granted that non-technical readers demand only a "working" knowledge of complex techniques—must they be lulled into a smug sense of completely "understanding" technicalities that still are matters of controversy or uncertainty even for experts? Admitted that "high fidelity" has been degraded of its literal meaning—must naive listeners be so persuasively assured that "better" sound reproduction is quite good enough and that they can safely ignore the more difficult and expensive *best*?

R. D. Darrell, compiler of "The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music" (first edition), has been writing on records and phonograph equipment since 1926.

The First Music

THE ART SONG. By James Husst Hall. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. 310 pp. $4.50.

By PHILIP L. MILLER

JAMES HUSST HALL, professor of musical history and criticism at Oberlin, has approached the song from the inspirational angle. His attitude is summed up in the introductory chapter called "Problems of the Art Song": "The basic aim of song is not mere formal beauty, but rather characteristic beauty. Song is a dual art and at its best there is a fusion of text and tone."

It is a strange anomaly that so little has been written on this subject; it ought to be easy to turn out guides and analyses for the performer if not for the composer. On the face of it song should be the most direct and accessible of all types of music. If the ideas or emotions expressed in the text are clear, then there should never be any possibility of misunderstanding the meaning of the music, and since most songs are melodious, nearly anybody can grasp and remember at least snatches and disconnected phrases of them.

Obvious as all this may seem, of course it just isn't so. Actually there is no musical form less generally appreciated, indeed more commonly misunderstood. Perhaps the first reason for this is that, as Professor Hall has noted, song is not simply a musical form, but a synthesis of two arts—three, if you count the interpreter. Its raison d'être is poetry, its expression music. It is not enough to catch the melody—the words are equally important. The second reason is a part of the first—the language barrier. If you don't understand other tongues than your own you are cut off from full participation, for translation is an extremely delicate and precarious operation.

If I may give one more reason, I think it may be that the very obviousness of song's accessibility causes it to be taken for granted. We simply don't bother to look below the surface, and more often than not we miss the point.

Whether or not these explanations are valid, the fact remains that the literature about song is very sparse. For the nearest thing to it in our language we must go back to Henry T. Finck's "Songs and Song Writers," published

Philip L. Miller is a member of the staff of the Music Division of the New York Public Library.

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in 1900. A good deal has happened in the last fifty years, not so much in the expanding repertoire as in the development of musical taste and a broadening of our horizons. Finck, it will be remembered, was a bundle of prejudices.

Professor Hall quotes him as holding that "many of the master's [Beethoven's] works fall far short of his high water mark" while finding in his idol Grieg "the rough places plain." Brahms was anathema to Finck, and he never tired of comparing him unfavorably with Rubinstein. Still, when Finck was in the groove his enthusiasm was infectious, and I recall in my own early days finding my orientation in his little book.

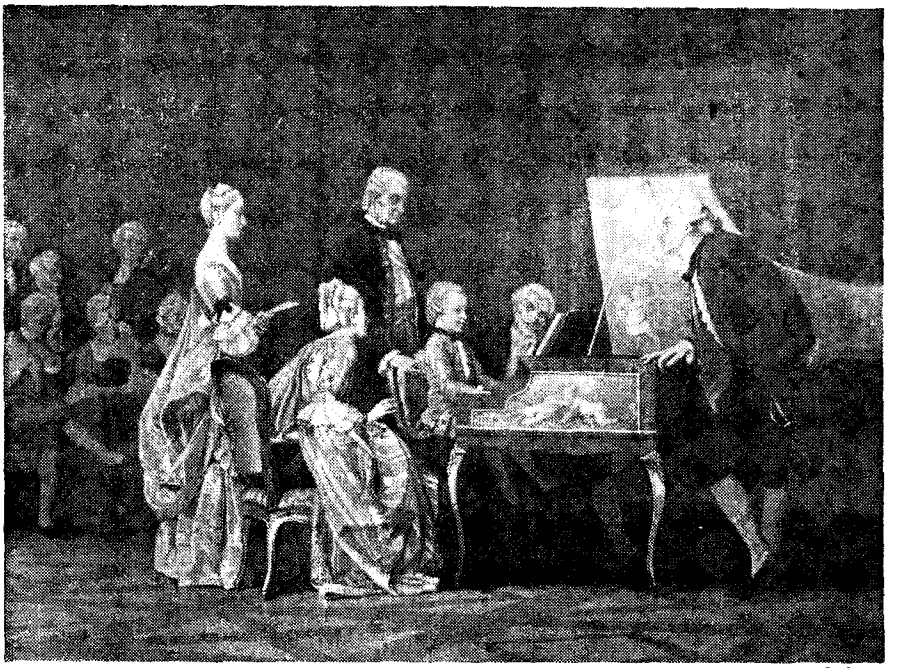
Professor Hall's work should do as much for a younger generation. His sympathies are broader than Finck's, his prejudices fewer and less apparent. Indeed he goes so far as to consider such slightly tarnished luminaries of the vocal studio as Charles Wakefield Cadman, Wintter Watts, and James H. Rogers—even Ethelbert Nevin and his "Rosary." It should be added quickly that Charles Ives, Samuel Barber, and Francis Poulenc are also discussed, though Aaron Copland, Paul Bowles, Theodore Chanler, Peter Warlock, and Benjamin Britten are missing from the index.

The scope of the volume takes in early Italian airs (though some may question the correctness of including these among the art songs) on the one end and the "later American school" on the other. Obviously no composer's output can be considered in full.

After some background material about the man himself and his style, Professor Hall considers a group of his best-known songs. Schubert, for example, is represented by "Erlkönig," "Gretchen am Spinnrade," "Haidenröslein," "Du bist die Ruh," and "Der Doppelgänger." Wolf has "Verborgenheit," "Gesang Weylas," "Anakreons Grab," "Er ist's," and "Auch kleine Dinge," with a bow to a handful of others. Fauré rates five songs and a cycle, Debussy a like number.

There is a little sketch of formal analysis, a brief resume of the text and some discussion of qualities, special merits, and demerits. Here is something to serve as background for what a vocal student will get from his teacher.

The value of the book will lie in its ability to enkindle enthusiasm in young singers and a healthy interest in others. Composers will not look to it for help, for the big questions remain unanswered—exactly what makes a great song? What kind of text is suitable for musical setting?



—*Culver.*

The young Mozart in Vienna, a painting by Gustave Boulanger.

Giant & Darling of Mankind

MOZART IN SALZBURG. By Max Kenyon. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 225 pp. $4.50.

By Paul Henry Lang

IN THE humdrum round of musical "letters," customarily revolving about the heroes of concert hall and opera, a literature that cannot hold a candle to the many excellent publications in the field of the fine arts, it is always pleasant to come across a promising item. Mozart in Salzburg is certainly a promising and fascinating subject. The city, known as the "German Rome," was the symbol of that which separates the southern Catholic from the northern Protestant German: the Italian influence, pronounced in art, music,—and religion. The imposing cathedral of Salzburg is almost a replica of St. Peter's in Rome; two dozen or so other churches, sumptuous palaces, and elaborate fountains, all set in a magnificent natural environment, make the city a work of art which was in Mozart's time an Italian enclave on German soil.

The powerful archbishops responsible for this splendor were equally interested in music, and music in Salzburg is, indeed, an interesting chapter in the history of music because of the enticing blend of north and south, Italian sensuousness and euphony with German counterpoint and solidity of construction.

Mozart himself represents perhaps the epitome of this mixture. Little wonder, then, that the most eminent scholars of his life and work have paid particular attention to his formative years in the German Rome. The list is so very distinguished that a new contribution must carry considerable weight to be admitted into the company. I regret to say that Mr. Kenyon can advance no such claim. There is nothing in his book not already known, and it is not even a first-class summary because its author is obviously little more than an amateur when it comes to musical scholarship.

In these days, when Mr. Kenyon's generation of musical scholars in England is producing studies that unite excellent scholarship with a fine sense for literature, such well-meant and pleasant demi-science is out of place.

Not that the author has not tried to do a good job; he has read much of the pertinent literature, but neither his linguistic nor his musicological equipment can do justice to the task in hand. His misspellings are such as to raise doubts about his ability fully to understand his sources, and there is even a howler, "Cousin Thekla

(*Continued on page* 31)

Paul Henry Lang, professor of musicology at Columbia University, is the author of "Music in Western Civilization."

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The Saturday Review

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America the Splendid

THE essential conflict in the world today lies between a moral idea capable of extending its appeal to nations not yet committed to the freedom of the individual and a rigid totalitarian system which now embraces half the population of the earth. Since the United States has become the leader and principal opponent of Communism, it is necessary for all of us to measure our own capacity to endure what may be many years of nerve-wracking suspense, as well as our ability to win with our allies the global war which may be forced upon us. There can be few Americans who do not know that the final result will be universal chaos and the death of civilization, or some form of a world government which will enable countries with diverse cultures and political systems to live, for a time at least, at peace.

We must first understand that this is not a utopian conception in which all the people of the earth can forever exist in harmony or embrace a universal philosophy of life. Neatly-drawn blueprints of the future are in the end not worth the paper they are printed on, however intriguing and logical they may seem to be. Man by his nature is a disputatious and fighting animal. But the major difficulty, whether war comes or not, will be the immutable law of survival. Nations grow in strength and wealth, or like Babylon and Rome rot from within and fall into ruins. The greatest menace facing Russia, aside from war, is revolution which would destroy the formidable monolithic structure of the central Communist state and all of its adherents. It is fortunately a menace that does not threaten the North American continent.

Since there is nothing which man has created that will endure forever—and the process of erosion is constantly at work—the nations or alliances of nations in one governing body cannot stand still. They must constantly be at work repairing and rebuilding, and they must change with the times. It is only too easy at any particular moment in history to regard a political situation as immutable. Who could have believed in 1880 that the Boer War was the first blow to the gigantic structure of the British Empire or that it heralded the end of the long Victorian peace? Did not Hitler announce a thousand years of Nazi rule? The question for Americans to ponder is whether, aside from a world war, with or without world government, our own country will remain strong and will grow and change within the framework of our Constitution.

At present everything points to our continued stability, and no one can doubt that we are growing in strength with every month and every year. It is not only our increasing prosperity, the constant improvements in technology and science which have made us the leading industrial nation in the world. Our habits are changing, too. The rapid development of suburban centers outside of all our cities, great or small, is a healthy movement. The unexpected increase in our population is a sign that young people are in some manner aware that they must make this contribution to the future. It has made a fool out of the statisticians who ten years ago prophesied that the peak of our population had been reached. The fantastic number of automobiles on our highways is a proof that almost every family can afford to buy them, and also an evidence of a new phenomenon in the world, a settled and prosperous country in which millions of people are constantly seeking new places in which to live and work. We are perhaps becoming a nation of nomads. A skilled mechanic or factory worker will leave his home in Oregon or New Mexico and cross the country by car and trailer to work in Delaware or the Carolinas for six months and then return or travel to another part of the country he has never seen. A retired businessman and his wife will leave the town in which their ancestors were born and motor to a new home in Florida or California. It is possible to regard this nomadism with dismay; but actually it means the end of a narrowing and sometimes dangerous provincialism.

There are other changes in the mores and established habits of Americans. There can be no doubt that the insidious burden of racial discrimination is slowly being lifted from the country. It still exists and may never completely disappear, but the decisions of the Supreme Court, and perhaps the common sense of people everywhere, have started a movement which will, we trust, become irresistible. The prosperity of the farmers in the Middle West is without parallel in the world. It was produced partly by fair prices and certainly by rapid development in the mechanization of agriculture.

VAN WYCK BROOKS in his forthcoming book, "The Writer in America," speaks of the "planetary mindedness" of the people in this country. "How could American society function at all," he asks, "if it had not developed the interracial mind? Our writers show a profound concern for the well-being of alien races, and have a deep, intuitive understanding of them." He mentions "the multitudinous flight of the bright minds of the old world who have settled in the most unlikely corners of the country . . . What they find here is not so much a nation in the old European sense as a state of mind," or to quote Wyndham Lewis, "a human laboratory for the manufacture of cosmic man." We are developing perhaps the first classless society, in which words like middle class, bourgeois, and proletariat have already lost their meaning. If so, it is an extraordinary achievement, the most significant of all the changes that have occurred in this country since that ominous day when we were plunged into war and our historic isolationism died overnight. If any nation is to lead the world into a future when there will be an end to great wars, it will be the United States. —H. S.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Outmoded Thesis

▶ YOUR STIMULATING SYMPOSIUM on Simone de Beauvoir's "The Second Sex" [*SR* Feb. 21] has provoked some thoughts on the place of women in America. . . .

Many of my mother's generation, the ardent feminists, raised their daughters to feel that there was something degrading about doing housework and rearing children. It has taken many of us years to realize that there is nothing especially ennobling in bringing home a paycheck; that we can best realize our potentialities by bringing up happy, well-integrated children and through our volunteer community work make our communities a slightly better place in which to live.

It seems to me that Mlle. De Beauvoir's thesis, in America at least, is somewhat outmoded and shopworn.

LILLIAN K. ADAMS.

Ava, Ill.

The Hand That Rocks

▶ IT SEEMS UNFORTUNATE that feminine women, who enjoy being women, have no publicized spokesman (spokeswoman?). Maybe the reason is that they are all too busy "slaving" for the men they love, and rocking those cradles that rule the world.

EVELYN C. EMMET.

New York, N. Y.

The Little Difference

▶ AFTER READING the various able analyses of "The Second Sex," I fail to recognize the womankind that I have observed, studied, and known for over half a century. Evidently Mlle. de Beauvoir does not approve of "the little difference" between the sexes, particularly with regard to such peculiarities as maternity, together with the physical, psychological, emotional, and endocrinological changes involved.

JOSEPH KRIMSKY.

Huntington, W. Va.

Second Sex Speaks Up

▶ TO ASSUME, that every woman would be happier or more useful if she were transported from her maternal role to a correspondingly restricted function of male-activity such as driving a bulldozer, fitting shoes, or writing copy for a national deodorant concern, is absurd. Obviously and fortunately they couldn't all become Eleanor Roosevelts or Clare Booth Luces. In line with this reasoning, one could assume that we should move our kitchen gas range into the bedroom because it is capable of producing just as much heat as the radiator. But what is the purpose?

Some women with natural talents should be encouraged to pursue these interests, but they should follow them because they so desire not because they wish to "prove" themselves. The majority in all probability will continue to engage themselves in the ancient function of child-rearing and housekeeping. In either case, the important thing is not *what* they decide to do but their *attitude* in fulfilling it. This attitude will never be wholesome as long as the philosophy of "The Second Sex" causes them to be merely self-pitying antagonists of men.

LAURA S. JAMES.

Tucson, Ariz.

"I'm giving my new Congressman six months to do something, and after that—watch out!"

Reality & Sex

▶ I READ YOUR COMPOSITE review of Simone de Beauvoir's "The Second Sex" with great interest and was much gratified to see that you considered it of sufficient importance to devote so many opinions and so much space to it. Since I have not yet read this treatise, I know that I can make no fair judgments at this time.

However, one thing has greatly annoyed me, and that is that Phyllis McGinley took the title of "Housewife" under which to air her rather flippant ideas. Of all the reviewers in your composite, she alone chose to regard a serious work as a chance for comedy. From examples of her published writings that I have seen in the *Atlantic Monthly* and *The New Yorker*, I would hesitate to classify her as "housewife."

Why not ask for the opinion, rather, of one of our vast army of "career housewives," whose *main* daily activities are almost solely concerned with child-rearing and housekeeping. The great majority of such ladies, I am certain, will assure you that life does not merely consist of singing over squeezing the orange juice, racing one's husband to the television set from the automatic dishwasher, etc. I, for one, do not own the last-mentioned appliances.

"The Second Sex" appears to embody the great problems of women of all times in a sound and fascinating way: a subject so much in the minds of today's feminine population, the majority of whom *are* housewives. Why doesn't *SR* ask a *real* housewife for her ideas on the book: someone who has not had a career outside her home since her marriage; either young and in the midst of raising a family, or older and struggling to fill the void created by the departure of her children for college and marriage? These are the women from whom I, for one, would like to hear.

DAGMAR E. BUBRISKI.

Williamstown, Mass.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The commonly accepted requirements for being a housewife of the "real" variety are possession of a house, a husband, and a household. Phyllis McGinley's house is in Larchmont, N.Y., her husband is Charles Hayden, and her household includes two daughters. SR considers it fortunate indeed that these responsibilities do not prevent Miss McGinley from writing light verse or performing her chores with a feminine sense of humor.*

Cheers & Surprise

▶ BRAVO AND THREE cheers for Phyllis McGinley's excellent point of view in her appraisal of "The Second Sex" [*SR* Feb.

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21]. As one of those "ignominious housewives" I find myself in complete agreement with her.

It was rather amazing to find Prof. Ashley Montagu as mild as he was in his review. I expected much more vehemence in the defense of the female gender from the man who wrote "The Natural Superiority of Women" [*SR* March 1, 1952].

BARBARA S. FULTON.

Stewartstown, Pa.

"Created He Them"

▶ . . . CERTAINLY WOMEN are people. We don't need a Frenchwoman in this year to make that irrevocable fact clear to us. In the Bible, we find Ruth and Esther among others who didn't fret about the "second sex." They did what was put up to them and won the regard of humankind.

So with women like Florence Nightingale and Chicago's Jane Hull, who submerged themselves in service for the human race, who didn't act coy and bite their finger nails because they were of the "second sex."

Maybe this might be news to the Frenchwoman. God made us all one and we are no less, no greater than the deeds we perform in His Name.

HELENE WASHER.

Chicago, Ill.

Eggheads

▶ THE EDITORIAL "The Egghead Problem" ends, "The intellectuals must be willing to be called highbrows or eggheads until a better and more dignified title is invented" [*SR* Feb. 21].

So? But what's the matter with "egghead"? Adlai Stevenson accepted it with placid good-humor, and if it's good enough for Stevenson, it's good enough for me. A better title may be desirable, but not a more dignified one, because the intellectual—the real, not the pseudo-intellectual—is anything but dignified.

The genuine intellectual is simply a man who has the wit to perceive the facts as they are, not as they seem to be, and who adjusts his conduct accordingly. A dignitary is a man who aspires to make the facts conform to his conduct. It follows that the intellectual in proportion as his perceptions are sharpened by experience is constantly seeing where he has been wrong and so is constantly scrambling to get back on the right track. Scrambling is undignified, hence the intellectual to the extent that he is genuine is sadly lacking in dignity.

"Whig" and "Tory" both originated as epithets, but when they were accepted with satisfaction by those to whom they were applied they became simple appellations. "Egghead" will be opprobrious only as long as the eggheads resent it. For my part, I consider it foolish to resent it at all—perhaps because nobody is likely to compliment me to the extent of classing me with the real eggheads.

In the current state of affairs I do not believe that any opposition will be effective unless it is endowed with a sense of humor; for the greatest peril that confronts the world today is the solemn ass who cannot see what is right under his nose. Against him let us by all means rally the eggheads who were "born with the gift of laughter and a sense that the world is mad."

GERALD W. JOHNSON.

Baltimore, Md.

The Egghead Saga Cont.

▶ THE DEFINITION OF "EGGHEAD" markedly differs from mine. While all eggheads are intellectuals, not all intellectuals are eggheads. Nor must all intellectuals be willing to be called "eggheads, until a better and more dignified title is invented."

An egghead, as I understand the term, is an intellectual radical who has become conceited enough to consider himself qualified to instruct his fellowmen on subjects—usually political and social—which are outside the scope of his vocation and training, subjects to which he has devoted scant study and much emotionalism. Not all, but some, of Felix Frankfurter's proteges are eggheads. So are professors of literature and languages who have turned aside to dabble in socialism, Communism, or the handout state.

Muddled and unhappy, they have allowed themselves by shallow emotionalism to be turned into bleeding hearts and crackpot reformers. The essence of the word is muddled or addled thinking.

PERCY W. BROWN.

Cleveland, O.

Letter from a Publisher to His Son

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Saturday Review *feels fortunate in having obtained permission from one of its friends in the publishing fraternity to pass along a copy of a letter he wrote recently to a son who suggested he might like to become a writer.*

My dear Son,

You confess your ambition to write, and speak of how things seldom come out the way you mean them. It may surprise you if I say that the same thing has often been said by writers of great experience and reputation.

The better a writer is, the more he must always be aware of the gap that separates what he wants to do, as he sees it with his inward eye, and what he is able to achieve, as it comes out on paper. That is why the best writers revise and revise and revise—to narrow the gap. But they never close it altogether. Readers, having no way of knowing the vision the author saw, judge him only by his written words and may never have an inkling that he fell short of his intention. But a really gifted writer always knows that, and this is one of the things that compels him to go on writing; for it often happens that as soon as a book is done, or as nearly done as its author can make it, he is apt to feel dissatisfied and more than a little frustrated by what he considers his failure, so he sets to work again and starts another book, always with the hope that this time—ah yes, this time—he may attain perfection. Perfection as he understands it can be simply defined as realizing a complete identity of his accomplishment to his dream or vision. He never does, and he never can, but great writers keep on trying, and that is one reason that they become great: for, in trying again and again, they do succeed in getting closer and closer to their ideal of perfection.

There is nothing strange in this. The same thing is true of all the arts. It must have been excruciating torture to Beethoven, for example, to hear within his head the exquisite music he wanted to write and not to be able to get every nuance and overtone of it down on paper. This sort of thing also applies to people like me who have no genius. As you know only too well, I used to like to play the piano. I played it badly because I have no gift in that direction. Nevertheless, I got great pleasure out of it because I could read a piece of music and with my inward ear hear how it ought to sound, even though my anything-but-nimble fingers could never make it sound that way. In trying to play, I hardly heard the sounds my fingers brought forth from the tortured instrument, so great was my absorption in the real music I could hear in reading the score. Others in the house were less fortunate, and you were one of them. The rest of you had to listen to the noises I made, and could know nothing of the music that rose and soared inside my head. So, being a practical man, and one who likes to get on reasonably well with his family, I gave up trying to play, for the loss was wholly mine.

We must talk about these things the next time you are home.

DAD.

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Broadway Postscript

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS—LAST OF OUR SOLID GOLD BOHEMIANS

EARLY in Tennessee Williams's new play "Camino Real" (here pronounced CAMino REEL and not camEEno rayAl) one of the characters asks, "What'd he say?" While Mr. Williams did not write the line with this in mind, he has discovered, since he opened in Philadelphia, that it sums up perfectly the reaction of a large segment of the audience. Theatregoers who spot the short, lightly moustached playwright in the rear of the orchestra bear down on him with questions about the play's meaning that he accepts with a mixture of amusement and amazement. "You give me another $4.80 and I'll give you a lecture," he jokes to earnest-minded patrons.

The most frequent question concerns the play's locale, which though not specified in the program seems to be a Spanish-speaking tropical resort. The majority of inquirers figure it out as some kind of limbo or purgatory where the soul discovers its final disposition, much like the ship in "Outward Bound." However, Mr. Williams feels only that his locale represents the general atmosphere of life. On the other hand, he does admit that the characters imprisoned in his locale have been offered certain terminal points. They are the Siete Mares, a swank tourist hotel where the nonconformist guest is in constant danger of eviction when hoped-for remittances fail to arrive; the Ritz—Men Only, a delapidated "pad" across the street where the evicted guest may go; the Fugitivo, a non-scheduled airline which caters to those who believe they can escape by flight; the Laboratory, where people who die without five dollars in their pocket are taken by the street cleaners in order that their bodies may be dissected; and some stone steps leading through an arch and out over uncharted deserts and snowy mountains, which is the terminal Mr. Williams would chose for himself.

"I haven't worked these things all out consciously and I never realized they might be confusing until I started reading the play to prospective backers," says Tennessee, whose formula for writing is to drink a cup of coffee and then let the words flow without advance blueprints, even though the procedure usually requires him to do several drafts. "I thought of 'Camino Real' as sort of a fairy tale or masque. When I originally wrote it as a one-act six years ago, the character of the locale was Mexican. But since that time I have been back and forth to Europe and Africa a few times and I've added touches from Fez, Tangiers, and Casablanca. Also each time I return here I sense a further reduction in human liberties, which I guess is reflected in the revisions of the play. In making the play longer I have added the character of Lord Byron, and have expanded the roles of Jacques Casanova and Marguerite Gautier."

That these characters, along with such fictional gentlemen as Baron De Charlus (the homosexual masochist from Proust) and Don Quixote, can coexist in a contemporary setting comes from the playwright's notion that ordinary time can be suspended onstage. Instead of diurnal chronology, he has substituted a feeling of time by dividing the play into sixteen blocks on the royal or real highway (the ambiguity is intentional). Each block corresponds with a French scene (a character enters or exits) and is announced to the audience by the hotel proprietor, a man who seems to take a delight in toying with the romantics who wander about in degradation and in low spirits.

"I wanted the regular announcement of the blocks as they come along to have the whiplike quality of time," says the poetic dramatist, who as an author having his most complex play tried out for only three weeks prior to its Broadway opening is supremely conscious of the flagellative relentlessness of clock and calendar.

Equally conscious of the approaching deadline is the play's director, Elia ("Gadge") Kazan, who has been working with Tennessee Williams on the "Camino Real" project over a period of two and one half years. Mr. Kazan thinks that the reason for any confusion comes from the fact that "Camino Real" instead of having the usual unity of story that limits expression has a unity of theme expressed far more completely than it could have been in a tight story. For that theme he will refer you back to Tennessee with the warning that you have the right to question him about it, but that he, in turn, has the right not to answer.

"The theme," says the playwright affably, "is pretty much the same as that of a play I wrote in 1941 called 'Stairs to the Roof,' which was produced at the Pasadena Playhouse. It is, I guess you could say, a prayer for the wild of heart kept in cages. 'Camino Real' doesn't say anything that hasn't been said before, but is merely a picture of the state of the romantic nonconformist in modern society. It stresses honor and man's own sense of inner dignity which the Bohemian must reachieve after each period of degradation he is bound to run into. The romantic should have

Tennessee Williams, Johnny Ray, and Elia Kazan—"the wild spirit of anarchy."

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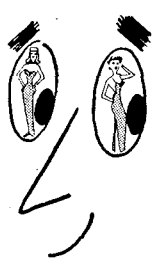
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the spirit of anarchy and not let the world drag him down to its level. Don Quixote, who appears at the end of the play, is the supreme example of the obstinate knight, gallant in meeting ultimate degradation, and unashamed at being the victim of his own romantic follies."

These ideas are perhaps summed up in the simple prayer of the gypsy's daughter, Esmerelda:

> Bless, or at least have pity on, two-time losers who're likely to lose once more. Bless all who believe that the stone-paved streets can be royal. Look down with a smile tonight on the last cavaliers!—the ones with the soiled white plumes and rusty armor—The fading legends that pass through here on their way to the unknown country . . . the greatest of lovers who wears the longest horns, the courtesan who made the mistake of love, the poet gone far away from his heart's green country and trying to find his way back, the has-been champ who traded his golden gloves for the moment it takes to lift the veil of a gypsy's cold-hearted daughter.

When the playwright was asked to lift the veil on some of the symbols used within the play, he had this to say: "To me, using a symbol is just a way of saying a thing more vividly and dramatically than I could otherwise. For instance, the hotel proprietor's dropping Casanova's shabby portmanteau of fragile memories out the window is a clearer expression of an idea than you might be able to do with a thousand words. However, I don't believe in using symbols *unless* they clarify."

By clarifying Mr. Williams doesn't mean that he feels a compunction to iron out the complications or contradictions within his play, because he intends it to be infinitely suggestive and filled with half-truths and intimations. "Now if 'Camino Real' purported to deliver a message, I would have had to be clearer, but it doesn't, and I don't think the people who find it confusing in its present form would like it any better if it were clarified."

The problem that does concern him as he moves into his final tryout week is Kilroy. Kilroy, an ex-boxer, is the play's most important character, but in the expansion from the shorter original, Mr. Williams has had to stop Kilroy's story and make him a minor character for almost the entire second act. "Right now I can see no way of extending the Kilroy story, so the only thing I can do is to try to make Act II so vivid that the audience won't mind Kilroy being in abeyance. If I had written this script in one setting, I wouldn't be having this problem. On the other hand, if the play concerned only Kilroy, it would have been much less of a play."

Aside from this, the only other major effort that will be made will be directed towards making the whole production move as swiftly as possible. "We're trying," says Mr. Williams, "to find the points where it is impeded, and fix them so that the play will have a smooth dreamlike quality."

Kazan, who faced somewhat similar problems when he directed Thornton Wilder's bewildering "The Skin of Our Teeth" ten years ago, recalls that prize-winning play as being cooler, more objective, and less complicated.

"'Camino Real' is the most direct subjective play of our time," says Mr. Kazan.

"It's Tennessee speaking personally and lyrically right to you. That's one reason we've pulled the audience inside the fourth wall by having the actors frequently speak directly to the spectator and by having some of the exits and entrances made through the aisles of the theatre. This device also gives a feeling of freedom."

BOTH Kazan and producer Cheryl Crawford are highly pleased to be doing a work that moves so far away from the strict naturalistic drama that prevails on Broadway. "No one," says Mr. Kazan, "appreciates how much 'A Streetcar Named Desire' did to open the avenue to a less literal approach toward the theatre. Because of 'Streetcar' we had 'Death of a Salesman.' Now we all hope people are ready for this."

While both Kazan and Williams are grimly concerned with the success of "Camino Real," they are at the same time infected with the wild spirit of anarchy within the play, and when last seen were walking relaxedly down Walnut Street on their way to "dig" a night club appearance by one

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of their favorite performers, the equally wild-spirited Johnny Ray.

* * *

IN the past, French comedy has proved an extremely perishable import for Broadway producers. The kind of Gallic performance which has made the Pagnol films so popular is apparently a vital ingredient—as is the rattling fast French language, which allows more time for subtle pantomime between the lines. Facing these disadvantages realistically, Sam and Bella Spewack have attempted to build a mildly amusing light comedy around the framework of Albert Husson's "La Cuisine des Anges" which could be played by non-French actors. Titled "My Three Angels," the play's chief virtue turns out to be the fact that it doesn't try too hard, and there is as a plus factor Walter Slezak's technique of delivery, which is funny no matter what he is given to say.

The action of the play stems from a unique and promising situation. Three convicts serving life terms in French Guiana take advantage of their own efficient criminal natures to help a hopelessly honest family triumph over a cold and ruthless uncle and his weak-willed, opportunistic son. As one of them puts it, before doctoring the honest man's tangled books, "I want to make the figures represent your true personality." He adds a maxim which might be placed on the walls of some of our big business corporations. "The trouble with most businessmen is that they treat mathematics as a science and not as an art."

But with routine acting and direction the high potential of this comic situation is only faintly realized. Were it not for the jovial and impish performance of Walter Slezak, "My Three Angels" would be a tenuous evening indeed. However, this Austrian-born actor, resembling a suaver and brainier version of Oliver Hardy, gleefully underplays every line to provide relaxed laughter.

José Ferrer has chosen not to borrow very much from the French techniques he was exposed to on his recent movie-making trip to Paris, which decision, wise as it may have been for this Americanized production, is disappointing to those of us who are anxious to see Mr. Ferrer's dynamic talent develop and realize itself more fully. Boris Aronson's set provides a sunny lightness.

All this adds up to a moderate soupçon of entertainment, but somehow you get the feeling that "My Three Angels," like the bottle of imported cognac in the play, has been watered down and is for window display only. —HENRY HEWES.

Music to My Ears

"PORGY"—"BORIS" WITH SIEPI—KUBELIK

AS a "Porgy and Bess" enthusiast from the pre-production days of 1935 when George Gershwin was playing "Summertime" on the piano for virtually anyone who would listen, I found the opening performance of the present run at the Ziegfeld Theatre just about the most satisfying I have heard. To be sure, it is something of a rousing experience to come upon this score, "live," after four or five years away from it; but with allowance for this, I'd still cite the present arrangement of Gershwin's materials (Ira's as well as George's), likewise those who are giving them life, as superior to any previous combination.

What has evolved, after fifteen years of playing and experiment, is a version that synthesizes Gershwin's intentions by eliminating much of what was fumbling and exploratory in his writing, retaining the most of what was sure and strong. Alexander Smallens's unflagging enthusiasm for the greatness in this score has given him a singular appreciation of its weaknesses. Virtually all the unsuitable recitative has been eliminated; a good deal of the choral music originally omitted for reasons of length has been restored; the out-and-in "Buzzard Song" is finally "in" at a point in the third act which was hitherto barren for Porgy; the balance of interest in the three acts is now much more even than previously.

Along with this evolutionary editorial work has gone a variation of emphasis in the staging. Whereas such people as Todd Duncan and Anne Brown exerted bone and muscle to give back to Rouben Mamoulian what he thought they *ought* to feel, the present inhabitants of Catfish Row have been sparked by Robert Breen's direction into expressing what they, in truth, *do* feel. Even the set has been cleverly (sometimes a little ostentatiously) orchestrated to give sound values (slapping of shutters, rattle of blinds, rustle of curtains) to the action. Despite the evident, painstaking organization involved, spontaneity, vitality, and freshness are strongly evident.

I still yearn for the sight of the presently concertizing William Warfield as Porgy, but Leslie Scott gave humanity and manliness to his characterization, singing strongly if with a palpably unschooled voice. Leontyne Price is the best of Besses since the pioneering Anne Brown. She may not have the searing intensity of Brown's work at its best, but she has a richer, more flexible voice, matched with a provocative body that makes nuance a weak word to describe her use of it. Helen Colbert is a simply wonderful

Cab Calloway as Sportin' Life surrounded by other members of the "Porgy" cast.

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Clara, Helen Thigpen challenges the memory of the irreplaceable Ruby Elzy with her deeply felt Serena, and though I can see the theatrical attraction of the massive John McCurry for Crown, his singing is sometimes close to inaudible. Cab Calloway was as much Sportin' Life as he was Calloway, which allayed the worst fears without dimming the singular luster of the eminent Bubbles, who created the part and most of its—ah hem—"tradition." Not the least pleasure of this occasion was to welcome back such untiring veterans as Helen Dowdy, Joseph Crawford, and Georgia Burke (Maria), who go right on being as cherishable as ever, especially the first two as the Strawberry Woman and the Honey Man.

In all, the unending ferment of the creative process has rarely been so evident: white men, reacting to an alien society, re-creating it sympathetically; a Manhattan Jew finding the inflections for the lamentation of "Dr. Jesus" and the singular joy of "I Got Plenty of Nuttin'"; and the decendants of the originals filling the whole with their own laughter and feeling. Walk, don't run to the Ziegfeld Theatre: "Porgy and Bess" should be with us for a long time to come.

* * *

The second "Boris" at the Metropolitan was substantially more secure than the first, as might have been anticipated, thanks to a greater all-round familiarity with the Mussorgsky scoring as revised by Karol Rathaus, more ease in the English translation. What could not have been so surely anticipated was the settling influence of Cesare Siepi's Boris, a weightier, more solid vocalization than London's, and a bulkier dramatic characterization, if one still to be fully elaborated.

Not since Siepi's first Philip in "Don Carlo" has he matched his artistry with a role to which it seems so instinctively suited as Boris. It is perhaps not easy, but wholly possible, to build up a psychoanalytic report on the Boris case, as London did, without making it more than a clinical study in neuroses. It is something else to convey a sympathetic feeling for a tortured soul. Siepi did it with a single gesture: the affectionate way in which he patted Fydor's head in the Nursery Scene. Whether by intent or by accident, he identified Boris as a human being as well as a murderer, thus making his characterization at least that much more dimensional than London's. I wish both men well in their characterizations; each could learn something from the other, if that is not too visionary a statement to make about rival operatic performers. In Siepi's case, it would be a clearer enunciation of the English text, though he delivered an unexpected amount of it with clarity and distinctness.

* * *

Rafael Kubelik's concert with the Chicago Symphony in Carnegie Hall (on the same night as the "Boris" with Siepi) echoed rather acutely the dissatisfactions which have led to his replacement after three years in that city. In the "Meistersinger" Overture of Wagner and Beethoven's "Eroica" he commanded a kind of solid but undistinctive execution that was not particularly stimulating at first contact and could be deadly at tenth; he was decidedly more impressive in Martinu's "Double Concerto" and the Ravel transcription of Mussorgsky's "Pictures."

At the same time, it attested to a kind of rigorous discipline for him to seek evaluation in such a work as the "Eroica" when he could have evaded the issue with something more accessible, less revealing. At the present time, in terms of the "Eroica," Kubelik's impulses are honorable but rather unsophisticated, energetic but unsubtle, clear-cut but not incisive. In combination with an orchestra which needs to be animated rather than driven, the results were necessarily dull of sound and uncommunicative.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

Sun's Blessing

By Marion Lineaweaver

IN THE impersonal night,
Just before morning,
I turned away from the window
And the witch-wind warning, seething.
I turned, and felt your breathing
Stable and strong,
Familiar to my heart.

I took it on faith, like blessing
Of the sun on the forsaken moon,
Or the moon stressing
Turn of the tide,
Or that inevitable acquiescing
Of a ship in irons
To the tide's pressing.

But for that natural thrall
We have no word at all,
No method wise enough to guess its worth;
Civilized ways of love
Can never show it—only at night,
Inheriting the earth
We know it.

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SR Goes to the Movies

THE GOLDEN KETTLES

—From "Ma and Pa Kettle on Vacation."

Percy Kilbride and Marjorie Main—"they're rolling in the aisles."

AS A MAN masochistically willing to undergo practically any kind of motion-picture experience, I found myself, during this past week, watching two of the Ma and Pa Kettle movies. One was called "Ma and Pa Kettle at the Fair"; the other was the fifth and latest in this highly lucrative series, "Ma and Pa Kettle on Vacation." The Kettle movies have proved to be, so the rumors go, the financial salvation of Universal Pictures Company; exhibitors are supposed to be crying for them; and the public seems never to become sated with the antics of Percy Kilbride and Marjorie Main, who portray an elderly couple with a brood of fifteen children. The facts are that the pictures gross an average of two and a half million dollars each, that they are made on B budgets of a half million or so, and that many communities play them as the top half of a double-feature bill, the other half being, perhaps, something gloomy like "A Streetcar Named Desire."

There have naturally been some theories to account for the republic's taking the Kettles so to its heart. One Hollywood businessman, for instance, came up with the observation that "they are just like people you know." I'm not at all sure I ever knew anyone like Ma or Pa Kettle, and it might be nearer to the truth to regard them as reminiscent of people one knew in other and older movies. M-G-M, the firm that holds Marjorie Main's contract and lends her to Universal, groomed her to inherit the place of Marie Dressler in the audience's affections, and there are those who view the movies as lineal descendants of the old Wallace Beery-Dressler series. They remind one too of the Mack Sennett slapstick comedies. Charles Lamont, who has directed some in the series, has been around Hollywood long enough to learn the old tricks of slapstick, and all the movies are kept liberally sprinkled with running gags.

The Kettles were first seen in subsidiary roles in "The Egg and I," and they seem to have stolen the picture right away from Claudette Colbert and Fred MacMurray. It was Leonard Goldstein, a young man then associate producer, who noticed at the sneak previews that the Kettles got the lion's portion of the laughs and who came up with a brainstorm of an idea to star them on their own. Betty MacDonald, author of "The Egg and I," was paid ten thousand dollars per picture for the right to use her characters; as events have since proven, she gave them away cheap. Goldstein, of course, is now considered one of the hottest younger producers in the business, and is at present hard at work at Twentieth Century-Fox. Success has been taken in stride by Mr. Kilbride and Miss Main. Kilbride is reputed only to have raised a quizzical eyebrow at being voted, not long ago, America's most eligible bachelor by no less an organization than the Midwestern Practical Nurse's Association. He is also reputed to have turned down, with great casualness, a one-million-dollar television offer.

An exhibitor, offering his explanation of the Kettles' popularity, said: "The public likes corn." True enough, to judge by the grosses; but the categorical nature of the statement ought at least to be watered down a bit; movies without that ingredient have also grossed well. The audience for the not unwholesome corn purveyed by Mr. Kilbride and Miss Main seems pretty well distributed over the country; not only the rural seats, the towns, and the hinterland cities, but in neighborhoods of the large cities—even cruel, sophisticated New York. A publicity man said to me: "Sure we won't do so well on Broadway, but go uptown a couple of dozen blocks and it's just like in the sticks. They're rolling in the aisles."

What exactly is it that rolls us in the aisles? Well, take a scene in "Ma and Pa Kettle at the Fair": there are two Indians (this comic pair is a staple in the series) who have set up a booth at the county fair to sell electric blankets. Pa Kettle wanders by and asks: "How are they going?" "Nobody's buying any electric blankets," replies one of the Indians. "Well," Pa drawls, "I'll put in a plug for you." The yaks can be heard a block away.

To carry on the scene, we next notice a woman examining the blankets. "Why," she exclaims, "these aren't made by hand. The label says, 'Made in Cleveland.'" "Made by the Cleveland *Indians*," the salesman tells her earnestly.

I have run into some deeper theories about the Kettles—the one, for example, about their representing some sort of American myth (it must be an Australian myth too, for the pictures are popular down under). Sure enough, though, you'll notice that the Kettles, homespun, countrified types, live in the most modern of houses, with every possible convenience. They own not only a pop-up toaster, but a pop-up electric egg cooker. (Pa catches the popped-up egg in an infielder's glove.) This is the house of the magazine advertisements all right, and Ma and Pa live in it, in a bemused sort of way. The Kettles, one might say, provide a link between the myth of the past and the myth of the present.

"Hey, Paw!" Ma Kettle yells, and thus we introduce the theory of the American matriarchy, with the Kettles representing the true, if unconscious, state of affairs here. The male has become devitalized and inadequate; the female is in the ascendant, if not really dominant. Well, take a look. Pa Kettle's primary role seems to be that of breeder, for he has indeed been the progenitor of fifteen children. On the other hand, he is just plain lousy at providing for them, and he wears the abstracted air of the artist or the handy-man. He didn't even provide the wonderful house, for that was won in a radio contest. There's never enough money, and it's Ma who generally comes through to

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save the day, though sometimes it's the relatives, or a friend. Their trip to Paris is made possible through the generosity of relatives on Ma's side. Ma runs the house in a frowsy slapdash way, makes the best crabapple jelly in town, as well as the best bread —except when Pa stores some Portland cement in her flour can. Ma puts up with Pa's little schemes and protects him from the slurs of the children, who sometimes wonder if he isn't really a little inadequate.

You may choose any or all of the theories to account for the Kettles' popularity, but credit must be given where credit is due. Percy Kilbride with his dead-pan face, his wistful and outlandish dignity, and his backcountry drawl is a very funny fellow. Both he and Marjorie Main are long veterans of the theatre, as well as the movies, and they know their business. Their material may be corny, but their expertness gives it freshness. Is there anything cornier than Ma's failure to appreciate the nuances of an apache dance in a Paris night club, so that outraged she throws the poor dancer into the spaghetti pot in the kitchen? Or Pa spending a dollar for a set of postcards that turn out to be views of the Eiffel Tower? But nothing is too simple, too obvious for the elderly couple, the innocents who have done their duty by rearing fifteen children, all of them turned out healthy and decent. They enjoy themselves and have fun, and it's the easiest thing in the world to feel superior to them. "Coming, Maw," Pa drawls, and the chain reaction starts: smiles on the faces of the audience, the theatre owners, and the treasurer of Universal Pictures Company, Incorporated.

—Hollis Alpert.

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At the expense of deglamorizing these fifty-thousand-dollar television programs let us briefly follow our tortured star through the five or six days of confusion in which he becomes embroiled so that he may support his Government in the manner to which it is accustomed.

Since a chorus girl on an hour program gets $140.50, a chorus singer $84.50, a bit actor with more than five lines to read $191, less than five lines $84.50, costumes, building, painting, and trucking scenery with stagehands to handle it about $10,000, and rehearsal in front of the cameras costing $350 an hour, most of the rehearsing is done away from the cameras.

And since rehearsals in the studio or theatre where the show will be presented would entail added expense, and since most of the studios and theatres are occupied with shows going on the air every day, the dancers, the singers, the musicians, and the players meet in the ballrooms of New York's less plush hotels, in gymnasiums, in deserted dance studios, and in the banquet room upstairs over a catering company when the catering company doesn't have a banquet to cater to.

The first day is devoted to a jovial, cheerful, friendly reading of the script around a table, so that the cast may familiarize itself with the lines and the writers may explain some of their jokes to the comedian. After this first session there are revisions to be made, the writers having lost their argument, and on the second day the cast reassembles.

There is now a cheerful, friendly reading of the revised script. Jovial has dropped out because one of the guest stars has discovered they revised some of his jokes right out of the script. By day's end everyone leaves not too cheerful, but at least still friendly.

Somewhere in the next two or three days they lose friendly. And then comes the day of the show when the entire company goes before the cameras. There is an eight o'clock rehearsal call. Any actor is a horrendous sight at eight in the morning. Our comedian goes without saying. He goes without saying the things he'd like to say to his motley little group of merrymakers assembled here by the dawn's early light determined, as he sees it, to make a personal triumph when they should be remembering that it was Shakespeare who said, "All the world is a stooge."

This is the funny man who steps into your screen at eight o'clock that evening. Somehow or other an hour of comedy, song and dance comes off. And after the performance there are the kisses, the handshakes, the hugs, and "you must come back again."

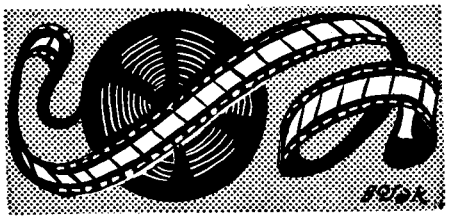
The following week our split personality is back in the side-street hotels with a new set of glamorous guest stars and the rat-race is on again.

Going to a rehearsal in one of these secondary hotels the other day, I overheard two little old ladies in the elevator.

"Oh yes," said one, "this hotel is getting real nice. Do you know who lives here? Frank Sinatra, Margaret Truman, and I even saw Tallulah Bankhead."

"Tallulah Bankhead!" exclaimed the other, "she must have one of those nice, corner, four-dollar rooms."

—Goodman Ace.



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MUSIC

(Continued from page 21)

from Basle." The young lady hails from Augsburg and the author mistook the German word *Bäsle* (a young girl cousin) for the Swiss city. No wonder, there is not one umlaut in the entire book in spite of the many German quotations!

While these flaws would perhaps not be fatal to the book, the literal interpretation of Mozart *in* Salzburg inhibits it from the start, for there is no purely Salzburg "period" after Mozart's infancy. He was on tour much of the time and came under powerful influences that are reflected in a great deal of music written wherever he was. The "Prelude" disclaims any pretense at painting a historical background; nevertheless the author gives us a brief sketch, told in the slightly sardonic and condescending manner of an Englishman on the grand tour in the eighteenth century. The great Salzburg musicians appear fleetingly but are left unidentified. The lay reader should be told who such men as Hofhaimer and Benevoli were. Even the contemporaries of the Mozarts are very meagerly described. (For example, Michael Haydn: "His talents were by no means limited.") The musical analyses are in the old-fashioned "conservatory" manner and flounder when historical considerations are imperative. Thus Mr. Kenyon misses the essence of that inimitably Austrian instrumental genre, the *divertimento*, but even more troublesome to him are opera and church music.

Although a young man, the author shows his elders' suspicion of opera, especially of that unspeakable Italian variety which he somewhat bafflingly calls *opéra bouffe*. (Shades of Offenbach!) He is even more distrustful of Catholicism of the Salzburg hue ("It is clear from his letters that Leopold Mozart no more doubted his religion than Englishmen doubt the importance of international trade"), and of Catholic church music, and cannot understand St. Foix's enthusiasm for Mozart's sacred melodies. "Writing from a Catholic country, it is not impossible, though difficult, to understand this point of view."

Frequent comparisons of his hero's attitudes and works with those of Handel, Purcell, and others are point-

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT No. 510

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 510 will be found in the next issue.

MBMAC DEF GH

EF KDFGLNH

GF OPGQP PGH

EFQMHRKAH AGSM.

K. O. PKTDMH

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 509

Antiquity is the aristocracy of history. —DUMAS.

Encyclopedia of

ABERRATIONS

A PSYCHIATRIC HANDBOOK

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With a Foreword by ALEXANDRA ADLER, M.D.

New York University College of Medicine

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Anxiety, dental
Aphasia and linguistics
Autism, infantile
Auto-punishment

Benzedrine, addiction
Bestiality
Body image disturbances
Boredom
Brontophobia

Cacodaemonomania
Chloral delirium
Choreomania
Clairvoyance
Claustrophobia
Cocaine, addiction
Crime, neurotic
Criminality

Depression
Devil worship
Dream murders
Dysprosody

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Ecstasy, artificial
Erotographomania
Exhibitionism

Family tension
Fellatio
Fetishism
Folie a deux
Frigidity
Frottage

Gambling
Gammacism
Gelasmus
Gustatory sweating
Gynephobia

Hair-plucking
Hallucinations
Haptodysphoria
Hashish, addiction
Head banging
Heroin, addiction
Heterolalia
Homosexuality
Hysteria

Iconolagny
Illusions
Inferiority feelings
Intellectual malfunctioning

Kainotophobia
Kakorrhaphiophobia
Kleptomania

Language frustration
Laughter, fits of
Lesbianism
Logorrhea
Lying

Malingering
Masochism
Menstrual anomalies
Mescaline intoxication
Murderer, mind of
Mutism
Mysophobia

Narcolepsy
Necrophilia
Negativism
Nudism
Nymphomania

Ochlophobia
Onanism
Opium, addiction

Pavor nocturnus
Pessimism
Pethidine, addiction
Phobias
Pornography
Psychosis
Puberty, aberrational

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less, because the author makes them without regard to the differences caused by the passing of time. He also is very fond of translating every gulden into pounds and every Catholic church dignitary into the nearest equivalent in the Church of England. Both of these are pointless, too, because of the differences in purchasing and persuading power.

Every once in a while the feuilletonist takes the upper hand, but feuilletonist and historian mix like oil and water. The exiled archbishop muses over his fate while watching the snow blanket Vienna, and we are given an intimate look at the three elderly Weber sisters, now widowed and living in Salzburg and presumably on their memories of the man whom one married, another jilted. "Three old women, very feminine, not too moral, badly brought up and probably rather dirty . . ." Well, it is pathetic, this picture, but even more so for a monograph on Mozart in Salzburg.

FICTION

(Continued from page 18)

with reason and without agreeing with those who are glibly optimistic about the future of Western Man, Miss Jameson nevertheless makes her readers feel that what may come to England and to Western Man may be better, if later, than we think.

Just Published

Lack of space prevents us from publishing reviews of the following books in this issue. In many instances we hope to print more extended notices in forthcoming numbers. Fiction published this week is described elsewhere in this issue.

CHARLES G. DAWES: Portrait of an American. By Bascom N. Timmons. New York: *Henry Holt & Co.* $5. The accomplishments of Coolidge's Vice President, financier, and influential politicker are described by a biographer whose previous work includes "Garner of Texas."

CHRISTIANITY AND THE PROBLEM OF HISTORY. By Roger L. Shinn. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $4.50. Dr. Shinn, head of the Department of Philosophy and Religion at Heidelberg College, Ohio, assembles the main concepts on history and its meaning from the writings of a number of significant thinkers, old and new.

THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF CEYLON. By a Mission Organized by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press. $7.50. An analysis of problems and recommendations made at the request of Ceylon's Government.

ECONOMIC PLANNING FOR THE PEACE. By E. F. Penrose. Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press. $7.50. The relationship of politics to economics since 1941 are outlined in detail by a professor of geography and international relations at Johns Hopkins University.

THE GERALDINES. By Brian Fitzgerald. New York: The Devin-Adair Co. $5. An account of an Irish family tree with roots in Europe and sturdy political-aristocratic branches in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Ireland.

THE HOPIS: Portrait of a Desert People. By Walter Collins O'Kane. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. $5. Arizona's Hopi Indians discussed in terms of their culture and traditions.

THE LEGENDARY MIZNERS. By Alva Johnston. New York: Farrar, Straus & Young. $3.75. An expansion of *The New Yorker* profile of two fabulous brothers, one a versatile promoter, the other a fashionable architect.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF MODERN ART. By Herbert Read. New York: Horizon Press. $4.50. A collection of papers dating back as far as twenty years which discuss the role of art in human evolution with particular emphasis on the greats of the contemporary art-world. The author is a leading English critic.

RACIAL AND CULTURAL MINORITIES. By George Eaton Simpson and J. Milton Yinger. New York: Harper & Bros. $6. A study of the causes and consequences of prejudice and discrimination as reflected in current political, economic, educational, and religious spheres.

RELIGIOUS TRENDS IN MODERN CHINA. By Wing-tsit Chan. New York: Columbia University Press. $4.25. Out of the welter of Chinese religious institutions such as Confucianism, Buddhism, Chinese Islam, and Taoism, Dr. Chan assembles and discusses the significant traditions that remain strong despite the Communist Government.

THE RUSSIANS IN FOCUS. By Harold J. Berman. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. $3. Russian D.P.'s have given Harvard Professor Berman material for study of the cross-section of Russia's people and their problems.

THE SEX LIFE OF WILD ANIMALS. By Eugene Burns. New York: Rinehart & Co. $3. Habits and urges from courtship to mating of mammals on this continent.

THE UNDERSEA ADVENTURE. By Philippe Diolé. New York: Julian Messner. $4.50. Diving has a long aquatic history, but recent activities have opened up new vistas of underwater life. Mr. Diolé draws a great deal on his own "watery" experiences.

THE ULTIMATE WEAPON. By Oleg Anisimov. Chicago: Henry Regnery Co. $3.50. Having observed the effects of Western, Russian, and German propaganda, Mr. Anisimov believes that they all consistently underrate the common man's sense of values. He presents a framework of ideas that merit propagandization.

WHAT IS A JEW? By Morris Kertzer. Cleveland: The World Publishing Co. $2.50. Rabbi Kertzer presents the principles and traditions that make up Judaism through the question-and-answer method.

THE WORLD AND THE WEST. By Arnold Toynbee. New York: Oxford University Press. $2. These British Broadcasting Corporation lectures by the noted historian were given last year and center on Western aggressions and their impact on the rest of the world.

THE WRECK OF "THE MAID OF ATHENS." By Emily Wooldridge. New York: The Macmillan Co. $2.75. In the diary of Mrs. Wooldridge is the real-life story of the disaster that struck the ship. *The Maid of Athens*, captained by her husband in 1870 in the vicinity of Cape Horn.

THE WRITER IN AMERICA. By Van Wyck Brooks. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. $3. What is the atmosphere in which writers and critics operate today and what are the attitudes of writer and critic that should cause concern? A noted American man of letters answers these questions in a series of essays. —S. M.

Notes

NOVEL OF GOOD MANNERS: Except for Edith Wharton, Ellen Glasgow, John P. Marquand, and very few others, American novelists haven't been too concerned with stories about the manners of persons to the manor-born. This season adds Alfred Slote to the list. His **"Denham Proper"** (Putnam, $3.50) is as proper a novel of good manners as you're likely to find. It's about Robert Denham Manning—who is at heart a Denham, which means conservative with liberal overtones, considerate, cautious, and inclined to be snobbish. In a Marquandlike first-person style with innumerable flash-backs, he tells the story of how he got that way from the days of his childhood through the days of a somewhat pallid collegiate revolt (abortive) to his present eminence as the spiritual head of the Denham family. Mr. Slote is even gentler with the snobbish tradition of which he writes than has been Mr. Marquand, but his style is as pleasantly readable. His light story should pass a number of hours for you if you want to spend those hours in an atmosphere of unredeemed punctiliousness and concern yourself with problems rather remote from current reality. —EDWARD J. FITZGERALD.

THE SOUTH SEAS AGAIN: Garland Roark is one of the fancier and usually more reliable producers of chase *cum* romance in the South Seas. This time, with **"The Wreck of the Running Gale"** (Doubleday, $3.50), he may have overreached himself. The chase is here and it's a dilly. Of all things, pirates have stolen a whole American ship out of Valparaiso Harbor and are scudding across the Pacific with it. In it is plenty American silver and the amorous as well as fiscal hopes of our hero-narrator, Owen Ibison. So off he sets in hot pursuit with a saturnine sea-captain, name of Raikes, who has a pretty doubtful past, but who turns out to be not so bad in the end. There's much bloody doings and a pretty complicated revenge plot which requires some elaborate flash-backs

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before Mr. Roark gets us all straightened around. There are some pretty silly doings, too, involving a ghost ship, an island kingdom, native witchcraft, moonlight magic, etc. In fact, the thing is overloaded with plot. If you can disregard the preposterousness of this you can settle down to enjoying Mr. Roark's exciting way with describing the problems of sailing through stormy seas.—E. J. F.

WOLF IN A CHINA SHOP: Wolf Mankowitz, who is a London dealer in antique China—particularly Wedgwood—has put his knowledge of the tricks and trials of the antique business to good use and come up with a narrative called **"Make Me an Offer"** (Dutton, $2). I use the term "narrative" instead of novel because the story is so slight as to be practically nonexistent. What there is of story involves the struggles of the narrator-dealer to locate and capture a green Wedgwood copy of the Portland vase.

Let it be said at once that he does so. But before Mr. Mankowitz lets him achieve that end he has let you in on quite a few secrets about his trade. Outstanding in this respect is an extremely funny and obviously knowledgable description of the intricate rigging of a country auction. I don't know if the methods used in the American branch of the trade are the same as those Mr. Mankowitz attributes to his English fellows, but I doubt they would sound as amusing. Unless described by Mr. Mankowitz. —E. J. F.

WHOOPS, WAR: It's been quite a long time since the writers of Westerns have made of their Indian characters the dark villains who used to thunder across the screens of neighborhood movie houses. Clay Fisher doesn't quite go all the way back to the complete simplicity of that earlier era, but he goes pretty far. The Indians in **"War Bonnet"** (Houghton Mifflin, clothbound, $1.50, Ballantine, paperbound, 35¢) are plenty villainous. Arapahos, they are in on a plot with Brigham Young of the Mormons to destroy Jim Bridger's trading posts. And they would have done it, too, if not for the courage, fortitude, and superior wisdom of hard-riding, hard-shooting, red-headed Jesse Callahan, a Gary Cooper type. Jesse not only straightens them out, but wins the love of beautiful Lacey O'Mara, rescues her son from Indian captivity and, when last seen, was riding into the California sunset, guess who at his side. Mr. Fisher is best in the blood-and-thunder scenes but he has a pretty good touch with the tenderer moments. —E. J. F.

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THE FREEDOM TO EXPLORE

(*Continued from page 12*)

experienced, but Sidis didn't have Wiener's bull-like strength. Although he was undoubtedly a mathematical genius, he spent most of his time alone, indulging in his hobby of collecting street-car transfers. Newspapers and pseudo-scientists were always doing stories on the child prodigies, and special attention was given his weaknesses. The press particularly celebrated two mournful events: Sidis's failure at his first job and his arrest for carrying a banner in a radical procession a little while later.

There are always people who glory in the failure of another, and this tendency is multiplied tremendously when a child prodigy fails. All the jealousies and resentments of the normal individual toward a person with above-normal intelligence found a target in the helpless Sidis. Wiener was keenly sympathetic toward Sidis and resentful of the press. He himself had once picked up a magazine and found an article written by an "educational psychologist" who described him by name and listed all his peculiarities, such as his clumsiness and his difficulty in getting along with people. "It's one thing for me as an adult to look back and discuss these things now, and quite another to see one's weaknesses paraded publicly while one is suffering from them," Wiener said recently. "Sidis was treated with almost unbelievable cruelty."

Sidis had a complete nervous breakdown which lasted for many years. Even when he partially recovered, he refused to go to his father's funeral, and was a ghost of a man who avoided responsibilities of any kind. All during the years when Wiener gradually conquered his difficulties and rose in the world, Sidis went down.

Shortly before World War II, Sidis was working as a calculator at MIT. He had pulled himself together enough to make a living. All he wanted was to go on collecting street-car transfers from all over the world, and to be let alone. "Let me make it clear: Sidis wasn't a charity case," Wiener said recently. "He was an extremely fast and accurate calculator, but he wouldn't take any responsibility, and still had difficulty working with people."

The men at MIT knew Sidis's history and understood him. He was given jobs within his capacity, and he was protected. His greatest comfort was that the press had forgotten him, and he at last had found privacy.

Then, in 1937, *The New Yorker* ran a series of articles entitled "Where Are They Now?" and turned the public spotlight on Sidis again. Wiener says today that probably Sidis cooperated with the writer of the article. There certainly are those who feel the article was a fair one, and that a magazine is justified in writing up anyone it chooses. Regardless of that, Wiener said recently that Sidis felt *The New Yorker* article pictured his father as a fiend and himself as a fool. Sidis sued *The New Yorker,* and in full accordance with the strict interpretation of the libel laws the magazine won the resulting suit. The basis of *The New Yorker*'s victory, Wiener says, was the last twist of the knife for Sidis: it was proved that he hadn't lost his job at MIT, so the article couldn't be said to have hurt his earning capacity. Soon after Sidis had his day in court, he died. Wiener writes in his book that he doesn't know how he died.

Wiener's own successes have made the tragedy of Sidis seem all the more poignant to him. He hasn't written about his adult successes; his autobiography merely mentions them in passing. He has, however, had two major triumphs—one in his profession and one in his private life. Both represent victories over tremendous odds, and in the light of them his book about his youth takes on added meaning.

The big obstacle he had to overcome in his professional life was his reputation as a child prodigy. A former child prodigy is rarely popular, and he has to accomplish something tremendous to avoid being counted a failure—an ordinary success would be taken as an anti-climax. In a curious way, the scientific world, by placing Wiener in a position where he had to do miracles to get any praise at all, has continued what his father began.

TO understand what Wiener has done in his profession, it is helpful to think of the universe as one large continent, only a small part of which has been explored. The frontier is the limit of human knowledge. On one side of the frontier is all the information piled up by countless generations. On the other side is the boundless jungle of the unknown. Most people never get anywhere near the frontier, because they never learn all that is already known about any subject. Wiener's exhausting education had one advantage: his father took him by the hand and led him to the edge of the jungle. Most of his life he's been exploring.

He's made two major discoveries, even the names of which only a highly trained mathematician can understand: Generalized Harmonic Analysis and the Universal Tauberian Theorem. Mathematical theories like these are actually abstract rules of nature which can often be applied

Your Literary I. Q.

Conducted by John T. Winterich

PLEASED TO MEET YOU, PERHAPS

It is possible you cannot recall the precise circumstances under which you met some of your closest friends. You might conceivably remember with greater accuracy the names of individuals who were the means of making various fictional characters acquainted. Who, then, introduced the following characters to each other, and in what works, by what authors? On the basis of five points for identifying the introducer, three for identifying the work, and two for identifying the author, a score of sixty is no-no, seventy so-so, and eighty ho-ho. Answers on page 36.

1. David Copperfield to Micawber?
2. Dr. John H. Watson to Sherlock Holmes?
3. Soames Forsyte to Irene Heron?
4. Mrs. Proudie to Archdeacon Grantley?
5. Clyde Griffiths to Sandra Finchley?
6. Isabel Archer to Gilbert Osmund?
7. Antonio to Shylock?
8. Phoebe Pyncheon to Clifford Pyncheon?
9. Eugène de Rastignac to M. de Restaud?
10. Alice to Haigha?

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specifically to a variety of physical sciences to show new ways things can be done. Wiener has been highly unusual in that he knows so much about physics, engineering, and many other sciences that after finding a new mathematical idea he can show the specialists what to do with it.

It's useless for a person who is not a mathematician to try to understand the ins and outs of Wiener's theories —and he dislikes trying to explain them to people who only pretend to be capable of learning them. He said a few weeks ago that he can get on perfectly well with people who have the training to know what he's talking about, and with people who have no intellectual pretensions in his field —it's the in-between people he likes to avoid. The *results* of his thinking—or some of them, at least—are perfectly understandable to anyone, however.

One result is the electronic brain. Another is the guns which automatically track aircraft. Still another is the "automatic factories" built by the chemical industry, and which other industries probably will construct before long, factories which employ five or ten technicians instead of hundreds of workers. Such worrisome wonders, and many other developments, are simply the first fruits of Generalized Harmonic Analysis. More can be expected, for there is a tremendous lag between the time a mathematician gets an original theory and the time engineers learn how to use it. In Wiener's case, the time lag is enormously reduced, for he can show specialists what the possibilities are; but even so, it takes a long time for enough people to learn his ideas to allow production of anything the public can see. There are now only five or ten men who can give courses in the engineering uses of ideas Wiener had twenty years ago.

Wiener doesn't spend much time developing the applications of his ideas; he'd rather turn that job over to specialized experts. Science is anything but a one-man show, and literally thousands of men with different skills contribute to "the invention" of something like the electronic brain. Wiener rarely sticks around to get credit for the final stages of anything; as soon as he's sure in his own mind that a machine such as the electronic brain can be built, and has shown the physicists and others the theory of how to do it, he likes to drop it and dive back into the jungle to look for something new.

Lately, however, he has become fascinated with ways in which some of his ideas can be turned to helping the handicapped. He thinks he can show how the iron lung can be improved by taking nerve impulses from the brain to whatever muscles are left in a paralyzed person, and making them control the mechanism of the artificial breathing apparatus. He's thought of a way to translate spoken words into impulses a stone deaf person can feel and understand. Someday he thinks artificial legs and arms can be made with which an amputee can feel. Such artificial limbs could be used in a manner very similar to their natural counterparts. Wiener is sure the development of such things is possible; he says it's just a matter of connecting the right mechanism to the remaining sense organs according to ideas which have already been proved correct.

IN addition to trying to help apply some of his theories to aids for the physically handicapped, Wiener is interested in the search for new insight into various forms of nervous and mental disorders. The electronic brain is proving of great help in this respect. To understand how, it is necessary to know something of this machine about which so many sensational tales have been told.

The reason why the electronic brain is so hard to believe in at all is that many of the sensational stories are true. It is not just *like* a human brain in its performance—it really *is* a crude sort of brain. Fundamentally, it works on the same principles as the human brain. Of course, there are differences. The electronic brain fills a large room, rather than a small skull. It of course works electronically, while the human brain works chemically. It can do some work much more efficiently than the human brain; it is helping to speed up many kinds of scientific research tremendously, for it can do certain calculations in a few hours which generations of human beings would require centuries to do. It has a memory—indeed it can refer to a whole filing system automatically. It even can exercise something like what an executive would call "judgment" by referring to statistical probabilities. There is no particular reason, Wiener says, why it can't eventually be fitted with various electronic and mechanical devices which would in effect allow it to see, hear, and feel. A mechanical, electronic "moth" which automatically seeks light and a "mole" which automatically seeks darkness have already been invented by other scientists. Wiener considers such gadgets rather elementary. It would be rather simple, he says, to fit mechanical hands and legs to an electronic brain. The present ones already type out their findings.

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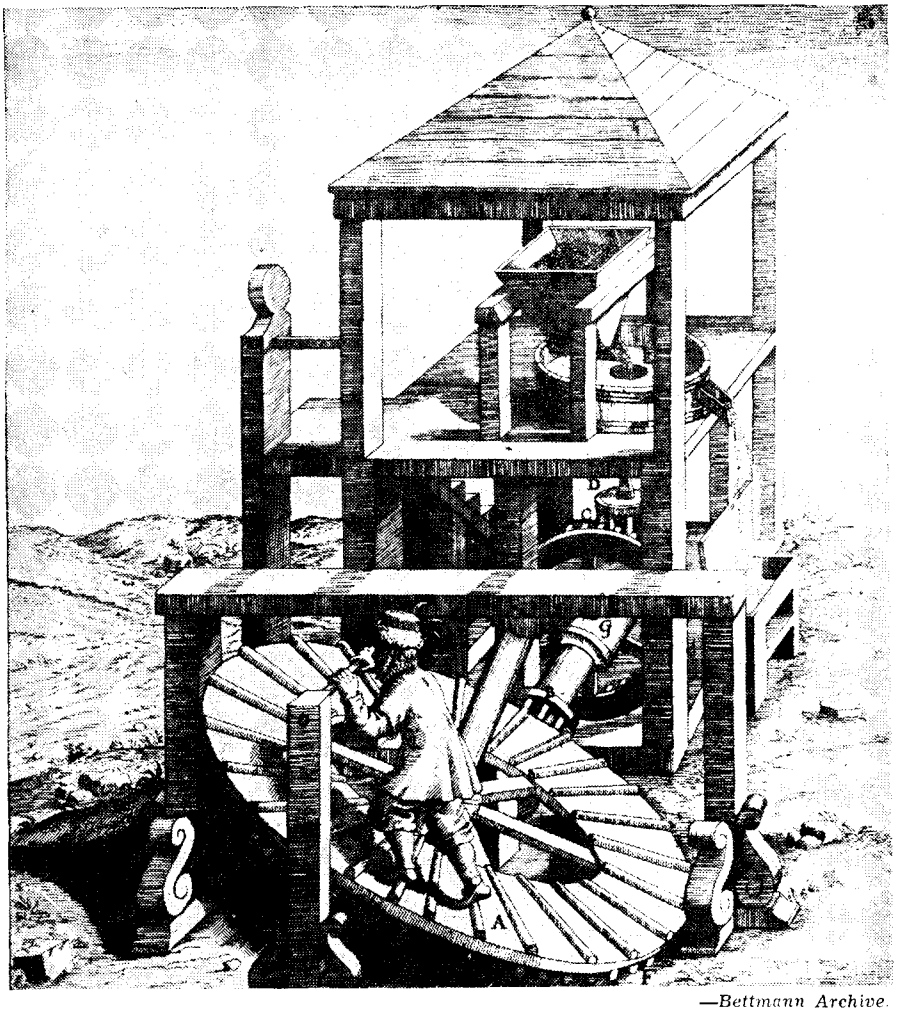

—Bettmann Archive

Medieval treadmill propelled by manpower—"thousands of avenues into the future."

stories of scientists who could actually create living beings, and nightmares of the machines becoming masters of the people are of course poppycock. Although the electronic brains operate on the same principles as human brains, they are a sort of crude parallel development. There are so many things the machines can't do that a study of them leads to greater awe at the miracle of the human mind and body, rather than a depreciation of it. The electronic brain works at too low a level to produce ideas. It's a rather dull thing, really. It has no imagination. It cannot exercise high degrees of judgment. It has no love, no pride, no shame, no sense of beauty. Although an electronic machine probably could eventually be made to do almost any one job a human being can perform, no machine could even attempt to do the great variety of tasks even the least intelligent adolescent finds easy. The machines will always be slaves, and of course could be dangerous only as the slaves of evil or stupid men.

Wiener's chief immediate interest in the electronic brain stems from the fact that it was constructed with the help of knowledge of the human brain. Some of the discoveries concerning its ills are applicable to human disorders. The result is many new clues to the long hidden secrets of the human mind, and to the dark mysteries of insanity. Wiener is just as anxious to track down these clues as he is to help amputees.

IT WAS Wiener's knowledge of all these possibilities inherent in the original mathematical theories he'd already found, and the itch to get back in the jungle to look for more new ideas, which in a curious way gave him enormous obstacles to overcome in his search for a satisfactory personal life. A well-known psychiatrist in New York who has consulted Wiener on brain research described one difficulty when he said recently, "He keeps seeing thousands of things that could be done in science, and he is always aware of the moral, social, and industrial consequences of his findings. He pours an enormous amount of energy into his work, and he gets tired—more tired than you or I could possibly imagine. Often he gets confused and has terrible letdowns. What you've got to remember is that he sees thousands of avenues opening out into the future, and has the mental ability to explore all of them, but only a human amount of energy and strength. Can you get any idea of how exhausting and confusing that could be?"

Wiener's second handicap has been the tendency his mind has to grab hold of a problem and refuse to let go until a solution has been found. The result is that Wiener is *preoccupied* most of the time. This gives him the classic eccentricities of the absent-minded professor, but more than that, he has difficulty in relaxing and getting any rest. His mind often continues to labor away even when he's asleep. Sometimes he'll wake up at three o'clock in the morning with the feeling that a problem he's been working on has just been solved. At such times he'll pick up a pencil and discover that he can put down the answer in a few minutes. One of his family says that she has often awakened at odd hours to find him rifling through her desk in a desperate search for writing materials.

Shortly after completing a lot of work on automatically aimed guns during World War II, Wiener said he didn't intend to work for big Government defense projects. Wiener said a few weeks ago that his reason is in part his horror of the atomic and hydrogen bombs, and in part his fear that he would be too much hampered by the requirements of secrecy. But his main reason is that such work simply isn't his job. Weapons, including the big bombs, are chiefly developed from original theories discovered long ago, and Wiener says he's never been much good at applying old ideas—he likes to roam around in the jungle looking for new ones. Many of the ideas he brings home result in new weapons, of course, and the electronic brain is working away most of the time on defense projects. This Wiener regards with mixed emotions, for although he is undoubtedly a genius, some things are no clearer to him than to anyone else. When he talks about his political ideals and fears, he sounds precisely like any ordinary citizen of the United States. The freedom of the individual must be defended at all costs, he believes, but he hopes there can be a minimum of killing in the process.

Wiener gets particularly angry at those who apparently feel the best way to defend the freedom of the individual throughout the world is to suppress it at home. The occasional abuse of security regulations in science enrages him. "If I were a traitor," he said recently, "I'd play ev-

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erything carefully and get a responsible job as an administrator of some big defense project. Immediately upon arriving, I'd slap one extra degree of secrecy on every document, thus effectively hamstringing everyone, and ensuring my own reputation as a patriot."

Wiener believes that the best long-range security for the United States lies in the loving protection of the liberty of the individual. "Both our recent scientific achievements and those of Russia are based on ideas found twenty or more years ago," he said recently. "At that time, Communism was less efficient in suppressing and censoring Russian scientists. It won't be possible for the Russians to get new fruit from old ideas indefinitely."

Wiener engages in no cheap hate campaigns against the Russians, and he doesn't underestimate the capabilities of many Russian scientists, but it's hard to listen to him talk about Russia without getting increased confidence in the United States. Russian science is at a pretty high level now, he says, "but it must soon show the sterilizing influence of a bigoted and compulsory orthodoxy." As Wiener gives more details about Russian science, his meaning gradually becomes clear: a scientist—or any human being—without freedom of thought and action eventually becomes little better than the electronic brain. Like the electronic brain, a human slave can develop old theories and carry on routine tasks, but he can't produce new ideas. "You see," Wiener explains, "you have to be *free* to explore."

This is the man who describes the first thirty-one years of his life in the book, "Ex-Prodigy: My Childhood and Youth." It's a volume well worth the $3.95 the publishers are asking.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Mr. Quinion, in "David Copperfield" (Dickens). 2. Young Stamford, in "A Study in Scarlet" (Conan Doyle). 3. Mrs. George Liversedge, in "The Man of Property" (Galsworthy). ("The Forsyte Saga," of which "The Man of Property" is the first unit, is also an acceptable answer.) 4. Dr. Proudie, in "Barchester Towers" (Trollope). 5. Bella Griffiths, in "An American Tragedy" (Dreiser). 6. Mme. Merle, in "The Portrait of a Lady" (Henry James). 7. Bassanio, in "The Merchant of Venice" (Shakespeare). 8. Hepzibah Pyncheon, in "The House of the Seven Gables" (Hawthorne). 9. Countess Anastasie, in "Père Goriot" (Balzac). 10. The White King, in "Through the Looking-Glass" (Lewis Carroll).

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(Continued on page 38)

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(Continued from page 37)

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By Doris Nash Wortman

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. An old game played with three dice, all alike, or the highest pair, winning.	132 93 144 159 57 97
B. Evincing social polish and suavity.	170 160 150 39 28 133
C. Commercial form of iron, made with carbon content, sold in thin plates (2 wds.).	136 172 37 113 147 4 107 126 77 55
D. Sample of a fabric, or a group of such from one manufacturer.	137 9 6 173 92 19
E. Visible sign of an idea.	65 76 14 23 109 143
F. French count who with his wife was involved in the affair of Marie Antoinette's diamond necklace.	71 100 139 103 167 43 12
G. Gay wolf who has appeared in literature since 1630.	67 58 125 99 61 146 82 138
H. This must crown America's good, according to Katharine Lee Bates.	111 11 35 129 74 66 154 45 169 49 63
I. According to fact; truly.	127 27 171 130 148
J. Infatuation leading men on to tragedy, vaguely personified in Greek plays.	78 80 10
K. To separate for a special use.	152 116 1 42 47 26
L. What Robert Ingersoll thought might be "a door that leads to light."	56 157 119 166 108

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
M. Subject of Holmes's most famous poem (3 wds.).	161 106 131 81 117 95 128 36 48 110 121
N. A statistic on a gunstock.	62 21 79 52 168
O. Genus of certain fruit bats, named for a girl changed into an owl in mythology.	120 91 141 5 105 162 20 94 51
P. That certain feeling when you are getting the flu.	72 115 164 40
Q. Treat with obsequious deference.	60 75 44 73 53 68
R. Marked by love of voluptuous ease.	140 118 64 96 86 155 32 135 124 90
S. Director of music at Hampton Inst.; first American to utilize Negro folk tunes for classic development.	158 87 25 17
T. To rail bitterly.	31 50 156 151 46 29 89
U. Particularizing a rabbit of the Northwest, white in winter and brownish in summer.	83 22 142 134 30 34 149 153
V. An affair of chance.	122 15 102 101 3 7 24
W. Arthurian Elaine's home town, thought to be Guildford, Surrey.	165 41 98 145 70 13 84
X. Spurious; illegitimate.	114 104 33 2 59 54 8
Y. Describing a human being who hasn't anything.	38 69 112 18 85 163 16 88 123

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd WORDS, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. Alongside each definition, there is a row of dashes—one for each letter in the required word. When you have guessed a word, write it on the dashes, and also write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. . . . When the squares are all filled in, you will find that you have completed a quotation from some published work. If read up and down, the letters in the diagram have no meaning. . . . Black squares indicate ends of words; if there is no black square at the right side of the diagram, the word carries over to the next line. . . . When all the WORDS are filled in, their initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Of great help to the solver are this acrostic feature and the relative shapes of words in the diagram as they develop.

Authority for spellings and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary. Second Edition.

			1 K	2 X	3 V	■	4 C	5 O	6 D	7 V	8 X	■	9 D	10 J	11 H	12 F	■							
13 W	14 E	15 V	16 Y	17 S	■	18 Y	19 D	20 O	■	21 N	22 U	23 E	24 V	■	25 S	26 K								
27 I	28 B	29 T	30 U	■	31 T	32 R	■	33 X	34 U	35 H	36 M	37 C	■	38 Y	39 B	40 P								
41 W	■	42 K	43 F	■	44 Q	45 H	46 T	47 K	48 M	■	49 H	50 T	51 O	■	52 N	53 Q								
54 X	55 C	56 L	■	57 A	58 G	59 X	60 Q	■	61 G	62 N	63 H	■	64 R	65 E	66 H	67 G								
■	68 Q	69 Y	70 W	71 F	■	72 P	73 Q	■	74 H	75 Q	76 E	77 C	■	78 J	79 N	■								
80 J	81 M	82 G	83 U	■	84 W	85 Y	86 R	87 S	■	88 Y	89 T	90 R	91 O	■	92 D	93 A								
94 O	■	95 M	96 R	97 A	■	98 W	99 G	100 F	101 V	■	102 V	103 F	104 X	■	105 O	106 M								
■	107 C	108 L	109 E	■	110 M	111 H	112 Y	113 C	114 X	115 P	116 K	■	117 M	118 R	■	119 L								
120 O	121 M	■	122 V	123 Y	124 R	125 G	126 C	127 I	128 M	■	129 H	130 I	131 M	132 A	133 B	■								
134 U	135 R	136 C	■	137 D	138 G	139 F	140 R	■	141 O	142 U	143 E	144 A	145 W	146 G	147 C	■								
148 I	149 U	■	150 B	151 T	■	152 K	153 U	154 H	155 R	156 T	157 L	158 S	■	159 A	160 B	161 M								
162 O	■	163 Y	164 P	165 W	166 L	■	167 F	168 N	169 H	170 B	171 I	172 C	173 D	■	■	■								

Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 8 of this issue.

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SR / RECORDINGS SECTION

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20,000 Cycles Under the Sea

FREDERIC RAMSEY JR.

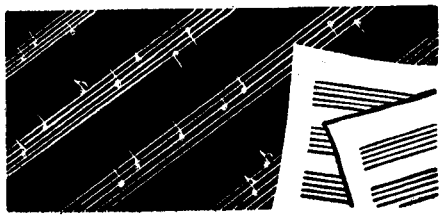
RECORDINGS of underwater sounds of biological origin would have little meaning if we were content to file them simply as a document of science. Yet when related to the past, they stand for more than this: they stamp with absolute authenticity some of the wildest dreams of our ancestors; they corroborate our prophets; they stand back of our poets.

This is not a new thing for science. Men scoffed at Daedalus, airborne, and grounded him with wings of wax; there was a terrible to-do when a handful of men began prattling about an earth that was round; it was difficult for Heyerdahl to find backers when he wanted to cross the Pacific on a raft. The proof often comes plodding after the pudding, and we are used to that. But it is not often that a scientific document suddenly lights up grayed-out pages or gives status to gibberish.

The recordings which make up the scientific document owe their existence to a war and to an accident. "During the Second World War," we read in Rachel Carson's "The Sea Around Us," "the hydrophone network set up by the United States Navy to protect the entrance to Chesapeake Bay was temporarily made useless when, in the spring of 1942, the speakers at the surface began to give forth, every evening, a sound described as being like 'a pneumatic drill tearing up a pavement.' . . . Eventually it was discovered that the sounds were the voices of fish known as croakers, which in the spring move into Cheasapeake Bay from their offshore grounds."

If these songs of fish produced consternation and incredulity when reported to the high command, the secret has been well guarded. But the next step, when all memoranda were in and the information had been somewhat uncomfortably digested, was to find out what fish were saying amongst themselves.

Researchers at the Scripps Institution of La Jolla, California, were set to work on a new project, marine eavesdropping. Laying down their microphones for the first undertaking of its kind in the history of ichthyology, they tapped sounds that grew "curiouser and curiouser" with each day of listening. Reports came in that a chorus of croakers was living off the pier of the Institution, and that this particular chorus had a particular time for singing. Every year, the eavesdroppers discovered, from May until late September, the evening song began about sunset, increasing "gradually to a steady uproar of harsh froggy croaks, with a background of soft drumming." The tanks at the Institution already contained croakers gathered for other studies; by comparing their song with that of the "wild" fish, they could be fairly certain that these, too, were croakers. But the drummers heard at this ichthyological listening post were still anonymous.



New sounds came in over the wires every day.

Earphones and loudspeakers crackled with "a sizzling sound, like dry twigs burning or fat frying." It was soon learned that "mammals as well as fishes and crustaceans" were holding submarine colloquy. Hydrophones were set up (or rather, dropped down) in an estuary of the St. Lawrence River. Hydrophones are a waterproofed, sea-going, pressure microphone. They had originally been developed by our navy to detect submarine motor noises; but they are a scientific instrument, and nothing

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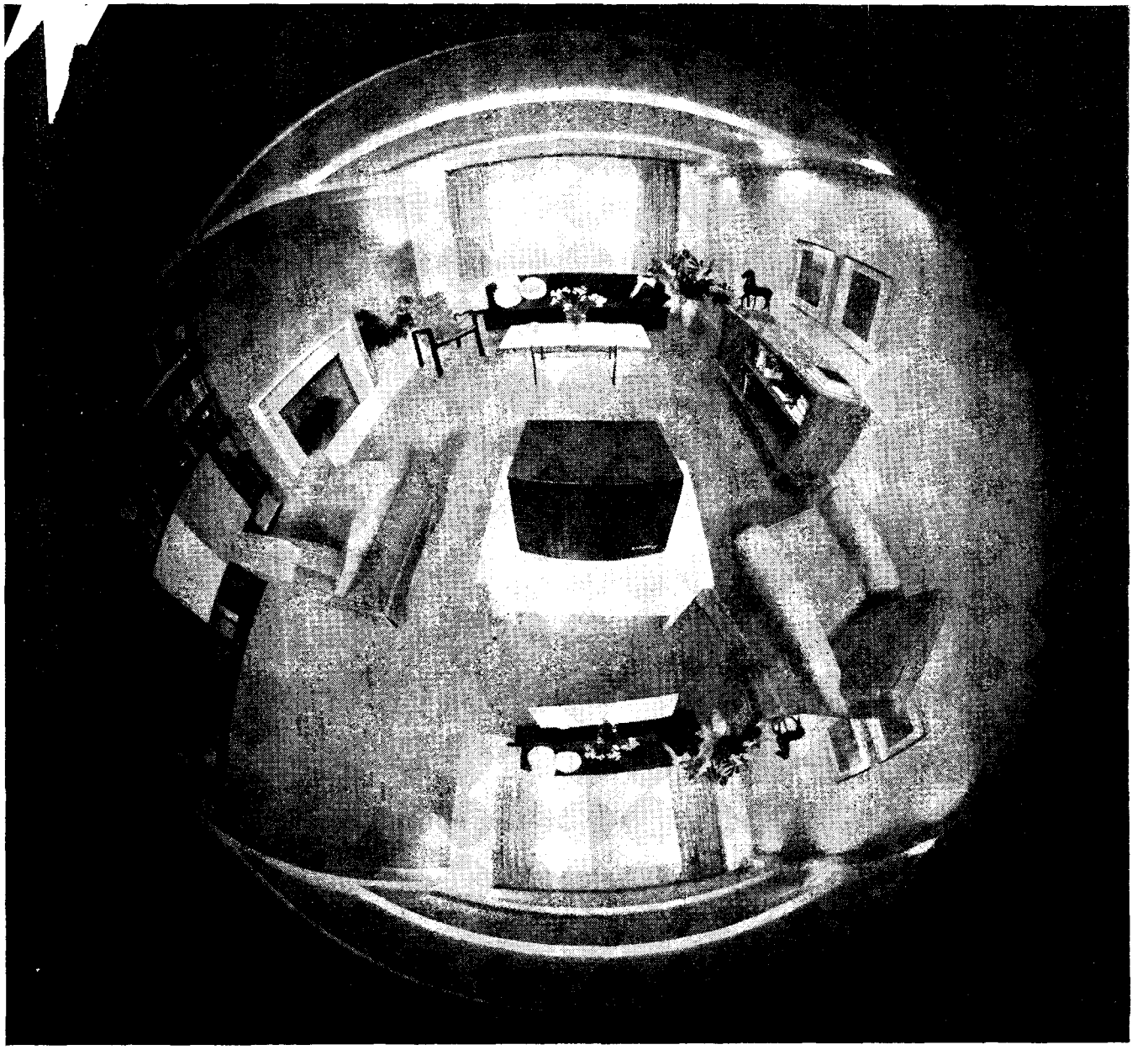
S TCH IT ON AND THE WHOLE ROOM PLAYS



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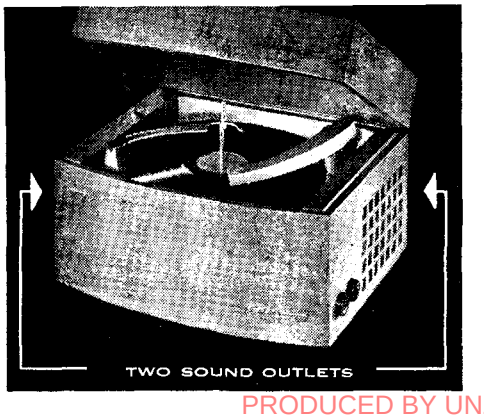

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on earth or undersea will induce them to shut up when other sounds come in range.

So the hydrophones dropped into the St. Lawrence estuary brought up "high-pitched resonant whistles and squeals, varied with the ticking and clucking sounds slightly reminiscent of a string orchestra tuning up, as well as mewing and occasional chirps . . ." These things were hard to believe; but this was science, and these were hydrophones, responding to and reproducing given stimuli. The question of who gave the stimuli was urgent.

It continues to be urgent. Many of the animals producing sounds have been isolated in tanks, as were croakers in the first experiment, and their song positively verified. Still other stimuli remain to be identified. Their source confronts us with a mystery as challenging as the origin of matter or the conquest of space, flying saucers notwithstanding.

THIS brings us to the recordings and the form in which they have been made available for home record players. The two sides of the long playing record (Folkways Science Series FPX 121, $6.95) are distinct, in that the second side contains recordings of sounds taken in tanks, while the first side reproduces underwater sounds of biological origin taken at various depths in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. When the source of sound is known, it is given; we learn from the labels that a cast of croakers, toadfish, snapping shrimp, sea robins, drum fish, cat fish, crabs, and spot fish has produced the lively show of thumps, mews, drumbeats, coughs, snaps, barks, and pneumatic rattles.

The bands of the first side are arranged in a sequence that lowers the armchair listener gently down to the bottom. The curtain rises above the sea, with the first salty gurglings of surface water, then the listener goes below with the hydrophone to the rather foreboding business that transpires at 2,000 fathoms (a little over 2¼ miles) *down*. It is doubtful whether any listener can stay fixed in his chair at this depth; the moaning picked up here—no man has ever managed to get down this far, and no man knows what animal is involved—is possibly the most mysterious, probably just plain most frightening, sound man has ever heard.

In concert music, everyone is familiar with the sumptuous, programmatized heavings and rollings of nature-pieces like Debussy's "La Mer." There is the modest thunderstorm of the Beethoven Sixth Symphony; there is the drawing-room elegance of Haydn drumbeats; the shrilling of crickets and other natural sounds of Transylvania are suggestively mimicked in certain works by Béla Bartók. There is in the concluding section of Alban Berg's somber "Wozzeck" an arresting passage which Ernest Newman has described as "the downward slither of some twenty consecutive ninths." Ravel's "L'Enfant et Les Sortilèges" gives us a delightful musical miauing, as imagined by a little boy in a nightmare about a cat he has tortured. Milhaud's "Création du Monde" is jazzy and danceable, and contains passages that suggest the primeval heavings which gave birth to the world; the dynamics of railroad sounds have been carried over into a range of compositions that might begin with Lumbye's frothy "Jernbane Galop," roar down the tracks with Honegger's "Pacific 231," and grind into the roundhouse with Duke Ellington's "Daybreak Express" and "A Train."

But these are, essentially, man-made and man-abstracted sounds. They are relatively familiar; we are even a bit cozy with them. But with an unknown sound piped from 2¼ miles below surface, we are brought directly to the mystery of the sea, and of our origin. "The mysteriousness, the eerieness, the ancient unchangingness of the great depths," Rachel Carson has written, "have led many people to suppose that some very old forms of life—some 'living fossils'—may be lurking undiscovered in the deep ocean."

Let us now see how close man has come, alone and without the hydrophone, to the idea of life—and sound—beneath the surface.

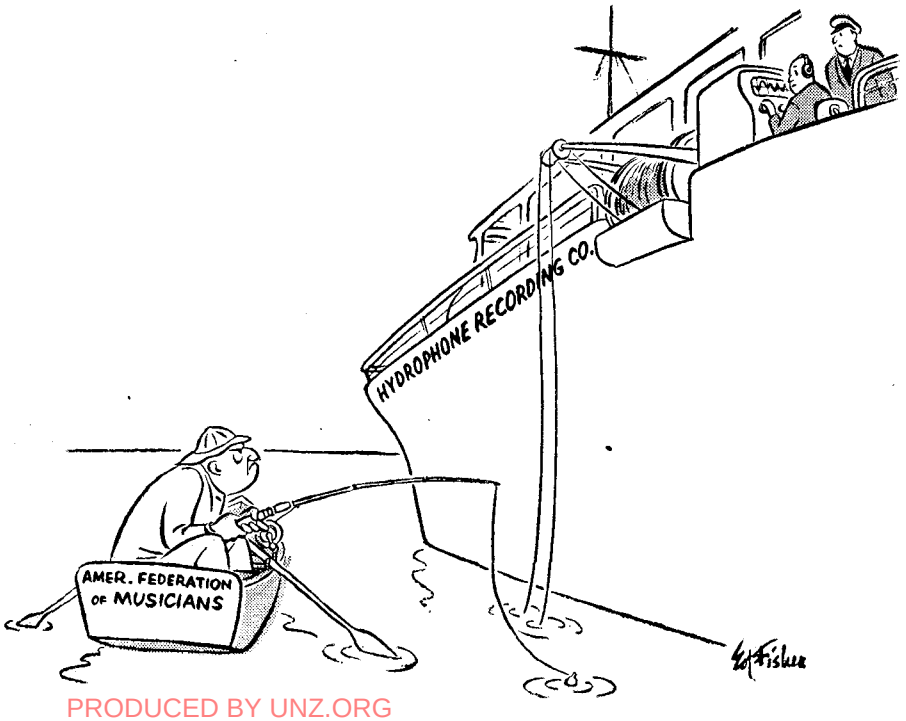
Perhaps of all tales told of th a, those of Rabelais were most ei - taining. For Rabelais, in a period of teratogenic scientific investigation ar. d momentous voyages of discovery, maintained a sense of humor. As background to Rabelais' stories, it is pertinent to turn to two distant points: Florida and the east coast of Malay. Fishermen off the Florida coast have reported hearing strange sounds when large schools of fish have come close to the surface. The men were in small, open boats, and their story comes to us before the days of the airplane and motor launch.

Their story might be dismissed as simply another case of *cafard* on the high seas were it not for an article recently published in *The New Yorker* ("Crocodiles and Human Radars") which tells how Malay fishermen track down schools of fish. The *juru selam* are men who go beneath the surface and listen for sounds made by the schools, then direct other boats to them.

"The art of *juru selam*," Christopher Rand tells us, "is based on the development of the senses to an exceptional degree, together—or so it is believed by the Malays—with a touch of the supernatural. . . . The underwater hearing of Malay fishermen must be unequaled among human beings anywhere. An Englishman on the east coast who has a motorboat told me that they could hear him coming eighteen miles away, long before they could see him or hear his engine through the air."

Then Rand talked with one of the men whose hearing rivaled the hydrophone: "He said he told the fish

(*Continued on page* 62)



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A Nosegay from the Twenties

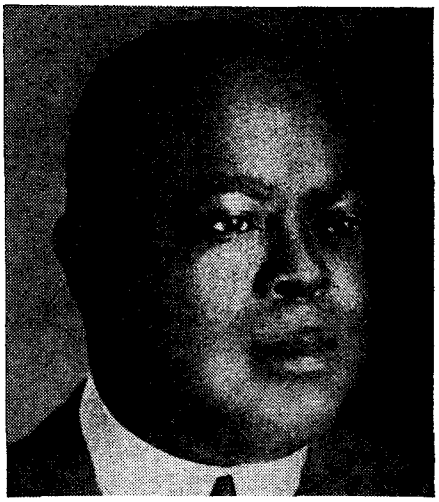
WILDER HOBSON

THOSE votaries of *le jazz hot* who run *The Record Changer* magazine, Bill Grauer and Orrin Keepnews, have now gone into the record business themselves, and they are the possessors of a mighty asset. Under their Riverside label they have the right to issue items from the old Paramount catalogue. The result is a number of LP's containing some of the most exciting New Orleans and Chicago jazz of the Twenties. It would be idle to claim that these revivals have the tone quality of modern recordings; some of the Paramount stuff, in fact, sounds rather rough. But this doesn't bother me, nor, I think, will it agitate anyone capable of adopting the posture of a True Believer. Some will probably consider the roughness a definite advantage. This pioneer jazz was often a pretty hairy business, definitely not epicene, accomplished with the aid of a good deal of alcohol and tobacco smoke, and taking place in some of the reachiest parlors known to American architecture. I fancy that some buyers of the Riverside LP's will want to smear them with gin just to complete the illusion of the Twenties.

The main point is that the music is wonderful and that, as Henry James might have "put it," it comes out of the phonograph with capital effect. Here, for instance, is what I should not hesitate to call one of the greatest of all jazz records—"Louis Armstrong Plays The Blues" (Riverside RLP 1001). The master, in his most richly inventive and poetic vein (frequently muted), is not only accompanying some of the historic voices, but is surrounded by Fletcher Henderson's superb small band of 1924-25. With Henderson at the piano, Armstrong's other associates are Buster Bailey, clarinet; Charlie Green, trombone; Charlie Dixon, banjo; and Kaiser Marshall, presumably, drums. With this brilliantly easy backing, and a constant efflorescence of Armstrong, Trixie Smith sings "The Railroad Blues" and "The World's Jazz Crazy." Ma Rainey offers three rich surges including a lyrical "Jelly Bean Blues." And the fine old vaudeville team of Coot Grant and "Kid" Wesley Wilson thoroughly clear the blue atmosphere with a trio of honky-tonk specialties called "Come on Coot and Play That Thing," "Find Me at the Greasy Spoon," and "When Your Man Is Going to Put You Down." Some of us have been waiting for these for years, and here they are—in very fast company.

Then there is what Riverside announces as the first volume of a "Johnny Dodds" series (RLP 1002), in which the New Orleans clarinet master is heard in many of his blithe and punchy exercises with such assistants as Natty Dominique and Tommy Ladnier, trumpets; Jimmy Blythe, piano; and Jimmy Bertrand, drums and washboard. Dodds could be a passionate, opulent improviser, as he so often was with Armstrong's Hot Five, but the works here are mostly in his buoyant, riding strain. Mr. Keepnews's admirable program notes point out that this was locally referred to as "Mecca Flats jazz," after a Negro musicians' rendezvous on the Chicago South Side. One irresistible number is called "Oriental Man," and in "Hot Potatoes" Jimmy Bertrand takes the hottest slide whistle solo I have ever heard.

Other Riverside-Paramount windfalls include an LP featuring the cornetist Muggsy Spanier, the clarinetist Frank Teschmaker, and other famous white Chicagoans (RLP 1004). In addition to the low-down, galvanic small band performances, from "Friars Point Shuffle" to "China Boy," there is a sterling piano solo, "Whoopee Stomp," by the late music publishing Frank Melrose. And one of the most thoroughgoing, boiler-plated, Chicago-style band operations I can remember is conducted in "Sister Kate" by the Charles Pierce group, with two virtual unknowns in the front row: Charlie Altiere, cornet, and Morry Bercov, clarinet. This makes a point which I think has never been sufficiently stressed in this column: that the jazz world is full of intense, able players who never happen to have hit the headlines.



—From "Shining Trumpets," by Rudi Blesh.

King Oliver circa 1915—"legendary."

Well, Riverside will also supply you with eight sides of the late trumpeter King Oliver playing the blues with two mistresses of the idiom: Ida Cox and Sara Martin (RLP 1007). There are eight blues of Malissa Nix "Ma" Rainey with the services of Tampa Red on the guitar, and of The Tub Jug Washboard Band (RLP 1003). And one of the most attractive Riversides is "New Orleans Horns," featuring the trumpets of King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, and Freddie Keppard (RLP 1005). Oliver's legendary Creole Jazz Band is heard in its first three recordings, made for Paramount in 1923: "Mabel's Dream," "Riverside Blues," and "Southern Stomps." Freddie Keppard, with his little band, is a raggy master I should not want to miss. I heartily agree with Mr. Keepnews that Keppard's "Stock Yards Strut" and "Salty Dog" are "among the very best items Paramount ever issued (which covers a *lot* of records)" and that the vocalist "Papa" Charlie Jackson "on his own 'Salty Dog' gives a wonderful lesson on what a 'jazz vocal' really should be."

I AM, as a matter of fact, a little overwhelmed by the Riverside largesse. Jazz of this bouquet is a heady experience, and I have been having it for days. It strikes me as time to change the subject radically, and that is made easy by the arrival of three excellent operetta discs. One is Offenbach's "La Vie Parisienne" (from which so much of the "Gaité Parisienne" ballet music was derived). The French soloists include Michel Hamel, Michel Roux, Nadine Renaux, and Willy Clement, and the Lamoureux Orchestra is under Jules Gressier. The work is as piquant as a properly placed black garter, and has even more staying power (Vox PL 21000). Finally, there are two of Oscar ("The Chocolate Soldier") Straus's operettas, conducted by the eighty-three-year-old composer himself, with principals, including Rudolf Christ, Margit Opawsky, and Ruthilde Boesch, from the Vienna State Opera. The works are "A Waltz Dream" (Period RL-1903) and "The Last Waltz" (Period RL1904), and I do not see why these versions cannot be regarded as definitive.

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Recordings in Review

Complete Ravel & Perfect

RAVEL: *"Daphnis et Chloé." Ernest Ansermet conducting the Suisse Romande Orchestra, with the Motet Choir of Geneva.* (London LL 693. $5.95.)

THE timidity of conductors is notorious, but it seems unduly exemplified in the more than thirty years it has taken for one of them to remember that the thrice-familiar Second Suite and the less familiar but occasionally performed First Suite are far from the sum of the score Ravel wrote for Diaghileff under the name of "Daphnis et Chloé." Since it was no one else than Pierre Monteux who officiated at the premiere on June 8, 1912, one might have imagined that he would have been prompted to accomplish this restoration; but it may be doubted that he would have done any better, if as well, as the redoubtable Ernest Ansermet.

Those who imagined that the "complete" ballet would amount, merely, to a combination of the two suites will discover otherwise. In time alone the present offering is nearly twice as long as the two suites combined (approximately 48 minutes against 25); and musically the participation of the wordless choir from the very start makes for a tonal experience quite unlike the usual (or even the unusual) performances by orchestra alone.

Furthermore, one can appreciate for the first time just what Ravel meant when he alluded to "Daphnis" as "a choreographic symphony in three parts . . . a vast musical fresco, less scrupulous as to archaism than faithful to the Greece of my dreams . . ." Some familiar musical material is heard at once, followed by a good deal wholly unfamiliar; but the total esteem for Ravel is much enhanced by observing the manner in which the musical organism grows, by the cumulative effect accomplished through the intertwining of what had previously seemed merely spur-of-the-moment ideas. As for the chorus, it is much more than the "optional" thing described in some program annotations: it is an element inherent in the total musical effect.

How much so, Ansermet demonstrates with his perfect feeling for sonority and balance, his highly cultivated sense of pace. Momentum is never absent, but it is never allowed to take the attention away from a proper articulation of the musical line. The chorus contributes much to the overwhelming climax, for it provides a new sonority just when it is most wanted, and in a tonal proportion that fills in the open spaces of the orchestration. As a recording this is high on the list of London's most expert, with a luminous sheen and no blurring even at the climaxes.

Brahms-Haydn, Elgar-Brahms

BRAHMS: *"Variations on a Theme by Haydn";* also ELGAR: *"Variations on an Original Theme." Arturo Toscanini conducting the NBC Symphony Orchestra.* (RCA Victor LM-1725, $5.72.)

WHETHER or not the "Enigma" contest sponsored by *The Saturday Review* (*SR* Feb. 28) will produce a satisfactory answer to the problem posed by Elgar (in the literary sphere), remains to be seen; but there is no doubt that Toscanini has produced a thoroughly satisfactory answer to the many problems posed by Elgar in the musical sphere. The "Enigma" is anything but a new enthusiasm of his (he has been playing it intermittently for twenty-five years) but, like various other things he has produced in these late years of intensive recording activity, the more recent the effort, the more numerous the subleties, the stronger the sentiment.

In fact, I can anticipate that some of our English friends will find this solution of the "Enigma" a little strong and overpowering for their tastes, to judge by the ways it has been played in the past by such men as Boult, Harty, and Sargent (even the composer himself on an all but forgotten HMV set). The proper way to evaluate Toscanini's approach, however, is with score in hand; in consequence of which one discovers that all the energy he pours into it, the swelling of its curves, the sharpening of its accents, are in the letter as well as the deed. I would cite Variation VIII as a little overproduced for the "gracious lady" out of another age whose likeness it is supposed to be (Winifred Norbury), but the authentic growl of the bulldog Dan, in Variation XI, is more than balancing. As for the gravity and spaciousness of the "Nimrod" section, I doubt that even Elgar himself could imagine it sounding so splendidly.

The playing of the authentic Brahms variations (by contrast with those in the Elgar set which reproduce the master's mannerisms) is very little different from the famous predecessor by Toscanini and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, save that the earlier one was a little ruddier in tone, a little sunnier in spirit. (Also, the flexibility of the Philharmonic in the mid-Thirties is something not easily duplicated.) Withal the clean bright sound of the orchestra on both sides is an embellishment of a record that adds more luster to the Toscanini legend.

"Fountains" & "Pines"

RESPIGHI: *"Fountains of Rome"; "Pines of Rome." Antal Dorati conducting the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra.* (Mercury MG 50011, $5.95.) *The same. Argeo Quadri conducting the orchestra of the Vienna State Opera.* (Westminster WL 5167. $5.95.)

THANKS to the developing science of acoustics, we can recognize that, in addition to "conductors'" music, "virtuoso" music, even "audience" music, we now have what may be described as "engineers'" music—of which these two current discs of Respighi are prime examples. In listening to them it is rather difficult to know whether one is primarily concerned with the work of Dorati or of engineer Robert Fine, the playing of the Minneapolis Symphony or the performance of "the Miller recording cutter driven by the McIntosh amplifier" (obviously I am quoting from the annotation; how else would I know?).

Let me say at once that both engineers—the identified Fine and the anonymous Westminster technician—have done splendid work in two different styles. The Mercury single-mike technique gives a striking bird's-eye view of the whole orchestra; the Westminster closer technique has us more in the middle of the orchestra. What emanates most strongly, I think, is the different kind of sonority favored in Vienna and Minneapolis for exactly the same scores—a point which has considerable bearing on one's preference in finished products.

The Minneapolis sound is more linear, with sharper detail; the Vienna has a richer texture and some remarkable high spots, such as the final shimmering chimes in "Fountains." As to directorial efficiency, I would cite Dorati for more nervous tension and a stronger drive in the big climaxes (of which each piece has its share), while Quadri is guilty of some poetic emotion among the fountains and pines of his homeland to which Dorati is more exterior. Neither is a virtuoso accomplishment on the De Sabata, let

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alone the Toscanini, level, which is just as well, since the engineers might have difficulty in capturing the ultimate as clearly as they have the acquiescent. On the whole, I find the Westminster sound pleasanter and more likely to wear well in the home, though I am sure the Mercury will have a full share of devotion among those bent merely on showing off equipment rather than listening to music.

Handel for Organ

HANDEL: *Concerti for Organ and Orchestra (Opus 4, No. 1, in G, and Opus 4, No. 2, in B flat). Ernest Ansermet conducting l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, with Jeanne Demessieux, organ.* (London LL 695, $5.95.)

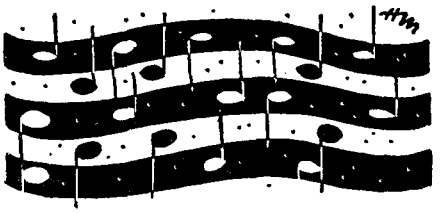
ALLOWING for the possibility that the organ concerti of Handel are an acquired taste, I cannot say that this offering whets the appetite for more of the same. The combination of sound values in the organ and the orchestra are difficult to serve with equal justice under the best of circumstances and the solo instrument favored in this instance tends to diverge from rather than merge with the background. In soft passages it is hard to hear, in louder ones hard not to hear.

In musical content these are less than the brightest aspects of Handel, tending to formal design rather than compelling expression. On the whole, his formal design is less interesting, of itself, than Bach's; and when the driving spirit, the lofty sentiment are absent, it can be rather dull. That, at any rate, is the benighted reaction in this quarter to this recording. Mme. Demessieux' organ playing is orderly enough, if without much imagination —except in the self-written cadenza for Concerto No. 2, where the flights of fancy are extreme in relation to the surrounding material.

Maria Müller as Sieglinde

WAGNER: *"Die Walküre" (Act I complete). Maria Müller, Wölfgang Windgassen, and Josef Greindl, with the Württemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner.* (Decca DX 121, $11.70.)

FOR operagoers with a memory of Maria Müller as a particularly handsome, strong-sounding Sieglinde in the distant Met days of Bohnen and Jeritza, Laubenthal and Easton, it would seem that some sort of sorcery has been practised to make her a presentable singer more than twenty-five years later. Actually, the



mystery is not as perplexing as it seems, for Müller was a young woman of twenty-three then, thus at an age now when a properly used voice may still be in its prime.

The remarkable fact is how much like the Müller of old this voice sounds —broad in line, with a free, soaring top and a perpetual tendency to get slightly out of hand. To be sure, the quality is now coarse and without the sheen it once had, but it is well worth hearing still. As those who know the Bayreuth "Parsifal" will recall, Windgassen has a voice of more than customary German tenor quality, but his discipline of it is decidedly erratic. Since Leitner is a conductor who takes Wagner's tempo markings literally, and always on the slow side, the interest here is either Müller or nothing. As performance, this version has little of the magnetic quality of the Lehmann-Melchior-List set directed by Bruno Walter, however more realistic the sound. On the fourth side, Greindl sings an excellent Hagen in the scene (Act II of "Götterdämmerung") with the Gibichungs. The vigorous choral work is credited to the ensemble of the Bavarian State Opera with the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra soundly directed by Fritz Rieger.

Brahms No. 2 on Two

BRAHMS: *Concerto in B flat (No. 2). Artur Rubinstein, piano, with the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Munch.* (RCA Victor LM 1728, $5.72.) *Monique de la Bruchollerie, piano, with the Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rolf Reinhardt.* (Vox PL 7950, $5.95.)

ADDING these two to the versions already available by Backhaus and Schuricht, Horowitz and Toscanini, Serkin and Ormandy, provides, certainly, for almost every conceivable taste—even an alternate, for feminists, to the earlier treatment by Elly Ney on Decca. About the most that can be said for the performance of De la Bruchollerie is that she works hard at it, and that it is rather clearly hard work for her. Tonally it is brittle, and the musical line is choppy as her command waxes and wanes in the face of difficulties.

Setting aside the Horowitz-Toscanini as exceptional, despite its age, for the supercharged orchestral playing, the Rubinstein-Munch version offers the most sound for this music of any recording save the Backhaus-Schuricht. In its own terms it is equally well realized, but I find more atmosphere and expressiveness in the sound of the Vienna Philharmonic and the Backhaus piano than in RCA Victor's remarkably distinct but somewhat metallic reproduction of the Boston Symphony and Rubinstein. The latter has his salient virtues, but they are more in the area of power and pianistic discipline than in expressiveness. Munch's orchestral direction is efficient but without conspicuous personality in a score that certainly allows latitude for a conductor to state his views. The solo cello in the slow movement is a real delight as played by Samuel Mayes, and here the Rubinstein tone is a factor of substantial value.

Odnoposoff & Italians

TARTINI: *Sonata in G minor, etc. Ricardo Odnoposoff, violin, with Heinz Wehrle, harpsichord and organ.* (Concert Hall CHS 1170, $5.95.)

THOSE who recall a pair of RCA Victor records of the early postwar period in which Odnoposoff was heard in brilliant performances of Paganini and Sarasate pieces (as well as the prewar Vienna version of Beethoven's "Triple Concerto") need not be reminded that he is one of the contemporary masters in all matters relating to the mechanics of his instruments. Opportunities to judge him as a stylist have been less than common, but his feeling for this Italian aspect of the violin literature is sure and communicatve.

In fact, I have a feeling that the present performances might have been consistently as good as they are at their best had a little more discrimination been invested in the recording. Thus, in a generally splendid performance of the Tartini sonata—one of the most exhilarating I have heard—Odnoposoff occasionally rushes a tempo with the kind of results that may pass in the concert hall, but which Concert Hall should be wary of letting pass onto a record. And, in an incisive playing of the Vitali, Odnoposoff permits himself some slides inimical to the style. The Geminiani work (unaccompanied) is a singularly beautiful piece, strongly played. In terms of backgrounds, I prefer the harpsichord for Tartini to the organ for Vitali; the Swiss Wehrle is adept at either keyboard, but the organ he uses has a rather mushy, indefinite sound.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

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Carl Nielsen—On LP & in Print

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The postwar years have seen an awakening in interest outside Denmark in the composer Carl Nielsen. Five of his symphonies have been recorded to date and a book on his works has recently been published here. In the articles below C. G. Burke considers the Nielsen recordings issued here and David Hall reviews Robert Simpson's "Carl Nielsen: Symphonist."*

CARL Nielsen is a favored composer. There is not a bad recording of his music in the LP catalogue. Yet his name is seldom found in the programs of symphony orchestras of the United States or the larger countries of Europe. Three standard encyclopedias ignore him. He is not mentioned in Grove's "Dictionary" of 1907 although he was then forty-two years old and had composed three symphonies. The phonograph, which was hospitable even before LP to comparative esoterica, had until 1951 nothing of Nielsen to show except three or four minor morsels. In that year London issued his Third Symphony, which was greeted amiably, but without enough critical enthusiasm to seem to warrant further pioneering. And yet in the last five months we have received, from four companies, three more symphonies, an overture, and two versions of a quintet.

These records, by a composer whom we may justifiably call unknown here, constitute a phenomenon without precedent in recording history. Sibelius comes to mind, because of the energetic Sibelius cult of the 1930's which had musicians competing to sicken us of him, but Sibelius in judicious measure had been on our programs for forty years, and the "Valse Triste" had made his name known to millions who had never heard a symphony. Nielsen wrote no "Valse Triste" or C sharp minor Prelude to make him an object of curiosity and pry open ears for his larger works. By 1925 he had composed six symphonies without capturing the attention of a widespread public, and the recording twenty-seven years later of four symphonies nearly at once, without an intervening propaganda, without the pretext of an anniversary, without an enthusiastic demand that one can discern, does not fail in piquancy, and suggests an enduring faith somewhere for this music.

These are the Nielsen records:

Symphony No. 1, in G Minor. Thomas Jensen conducting the Danish National Radio Orchestra. (London LL 635, $5.95.)

Symphony No. 3. Erik Tuxen conducting the same orchestra, with Inger Lis Hassing, soprano, and Erik Sjoëberg, baritone. (London LL 100, $5.95.)

Symphony No. 4. Launy Grøndahl conducting the same orchestra. (RCA Victor LHMV 1006, $5.95.)

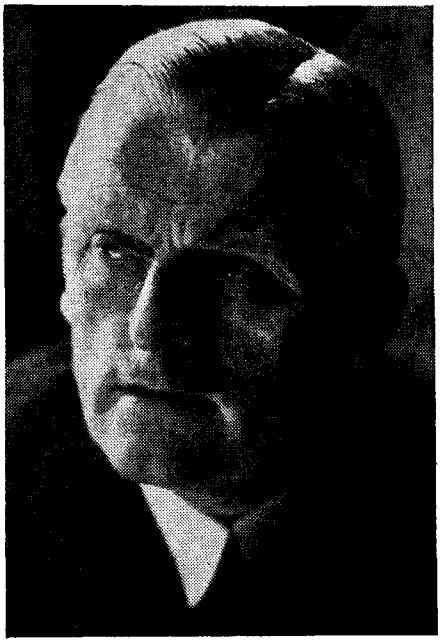
Symphony No. 6. Thomas Jensen conducting the same orchestra. (Mercury MG 10137, $4.85.)

Helios Overture. Erik Tuxen conducting the same orchestra. (London LS 653, $4.95.)

Quintet. Copenhagen Wind Quintet. (Mercury MG 15046, $4.85.) *New Art Wind Quintet.* (Classic Editions 2001, $5.95.)

Since Nielsen is the only Danish symphonist that one can name, the orchestral records, all by the same state-subsidized group, may be regarded as authoritative and worthy of the tradition that we must presume exists in Denmark, a Nielsen tradition. The tonal adjustments of this orchestra and its precision of stroke illustrate a familiarity made by experience.

The music on these records was composed during a period of thirty-three years. Brahms had five years still to live when the First Symphony of Nielsen was written, and when the Danish composer finished his Sixth the genius of Stravinsky was no longer derided except in Boston. The amazing change in musical construction during this third of a century was not to the advantage of the Dane, with a conservative background and a bent for bold innovation. His innovations were intended to interest and not astonish, and they were bound to seem pallid after the daring revolutionary demonstrations of Strauss, Stravinsky, and the younger Frenchmen. Each step forward that Nielsen took must have appeared timid and tentative in a musical world where his contemporaries were trying everything.



Launy Grøndahl—"a Nielsen tradition."

Nielsen was a sturdy and original musical thinker. It is an earnest of his independence that direct individual influences are not easily perceived in his work. There is some indebtedness to Brahms, some to Rimsky-Korsakov; there is a natural contagion of nationalism after the example of the Bohemians, the Russians (who exploited the nationalism of the Caucasus), the French (utilizing the nationalism of Spain), and Grieg. Here we may find a cause of the cleavage between Danish and other attitudes towards Nielsen, for the folk tunes that he employed are in an idiom strange to the lands away from the northern peninsula and the sister countries of Norway and Sweden.

He had a diatonic bias and a predilection for philosophy, hard to express in music since Beethoven, confessed in the titles he gave to his symphonies "Expansive," "Pure," "Inextinguishable." His thematic material is generally blunt and not memorable. His harmonic structure is secondary to a bold and often arresting counterpoint. He is susceptible to certain keys and uses them symbolically, but avoids continued presence in one key as he would contagion; and indeed repeated shifts of manner and emphases are striking in these records. There is no long line: there are series of progressions to short destinations. His orchestration is exhaustive and original, and like all men who experiment hardily with new combinations, he achieves some grandeur and some absurdity. "Symphony" means anything now, and was beginning to when he composed his: he exploits a fragmentary sonata form on occasion, but his romanticism is more at home in a freer expression. There is a snarling bitterness in his parody of Stravinsky in the second movement of the Sixth Symphony.

To one who has heard these works two or three times (via the records) they do not communicate emotion and do not impress a memory of unique or emphatic character. They seem disjunctive and fabricated, not without spasmodic interest and fre-

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quent cleverness but quite void of spontaneity. No. 6 is the most amusing if not the best, and in the superb Mercury sound offers a special attraction to discophiles susceptible to reproduction of fine timbre, natural string tone, and careful balance as a prime value in itself. All the recordings are good, but this one merits special commendation.

It is not impossible that the awareness of American companies of Danish recording prowess, and the awareness of the Danish government of the American awareness, have in a friendly way promoted the Nielsen revival.

—C. G. BURKE.

* * *

THE symphonies of Carl Nielsen (1865-1931), Denmark's great contemporary of Finland's Jean Sibelius, have already begun to speak eloquently to American listeners through recordings and through the thrilling performances given by the Danish National Orchestra of the State Radio during its 1952 fall tour. Despite this recent coming into its own of the music, even some of us so-called experts in the field of Scandinavian music have had a hard time gaining an accurate picture of Carl Nielsen, the man and the creative artist.

For this reason "Carl Nielsen: Symphonist," by Dr. Robert Simpson, English composer, critic, and member of the Music Department of the BBC, is singularly welcome.*

Dr. Simpson focuses his sights primarily on Nielsen, the creative artist and his work, leaving the biographical coverage for the most part to a twenty-nine-page biographical appendix by Torben Meyer, who together with Frede Schandorf Petersen has produced the definitive two-volume Danish study of Nielsen and his work. All of the significant Nielsen music is surveyed in Simpson's book; but the emphasis is quite correctly placed on the six symphonies—which together with those of Gustav Mahler, Jean Sibelius, and Vaughan Williams constitute the most substantial achievement in that medium since the death of Brahms.

Dr. Simpson is careful to place each of Nielsen's major works in proper relationship to the general European musical scene at the time of its writing as well as to the events of the composer's own life. His analyses are very conscientious—almost too much so when it comes to the discussion of

(*Continued on page* 55)

CARL NIELSEN: SYMPHONIST. By Robert Simpson. Biographical appendix by Torben Meyer. New York: The Macmillan Co. 236 pp. $4.50.

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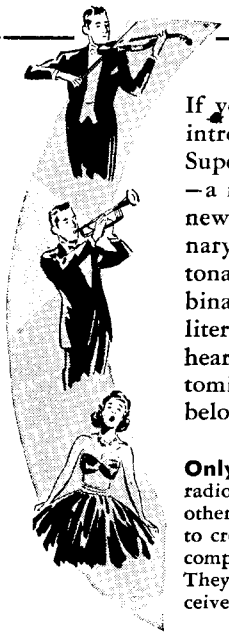

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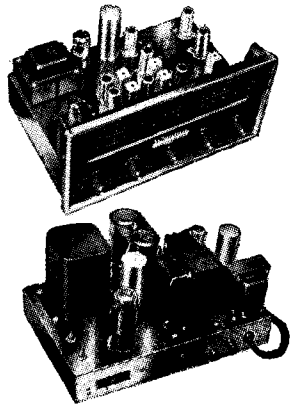

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Opera Roundup

A COMPOSER is born lucky if he can mature during an era when the music of his immediate predecessors and his contemporaries offers him technical and stylistic traditions in full vigor. He may accept the traditions, contentedly work within them. Or he may rebel against them fiercely, choosing to endure the hardships of simultaneously carving out his means and filling them with living significance. But if he encounters nothing he can either accept or reject, he may be doomed to ceaseless undirected experiment, ending up as of more interest to historians than to performers and listeners.

Glinka (1803-57) found no living, strong secular musical traditions in the Russia of his day. His "A Life for the Czar" might be a second-rate Italian opera translated into Russian, its score tampered with by a Russian editor. (In fairness to Glinka, it should be said that his "Russlan and Ludmilla" is reputed to be somewhat better.) Bellini (1801-35) grew up in a land of living opera. His "La Sonnambula" moves with the certainty and ease that Glinka lacked—and not merely, I am certain, because he "had" genius that Glinka had not. Wolf-Ferrari (1876-1948) found himself with a light talent among the fading embers of the *opera buffa* tradition. He rebelled against it notably only once, adopting the uncongenial, living tradition of *verismo*—and composed the rather vulgar "I Giojelli della Madonna." But his "I Quattro Rusteghi" (known at the New York City Center, for some truly obscure reason, as "The Four Ruffians") is unoriginal and pale, if not moribund.

The Vanguard recording of "A Life for the Czar" (VRD 6010/12, $17.85) is technically good, but it is incomplete, entire scenes having been omitted. The Bolshoi Opera performance shows this ancestor of Russian operas to be a patchwork of banalities, among which only neat, gleaming orchestration and an occasional melody evidence genuine talent. A banal, but jolly polonaise, introduced in a Polish court scene, was the best tag Glinka could attach later to Polish soldiers in a scene of grim tragedy! The effect, hilarious in itself, is a perfect example of stylistic ineptitude. The voices in this recording are consistently less good than those in the recent Rimsky-Korsakov "May Night," and altogether this set will probably be of more interest to musicologists than to the usual opera-lover.

To turn from Glinka's amateur earnestness to Bellini's "La Sonnambula" is to come suddenly into the presence of living music. Some twentieth-century listeners may find Bellini too fleshily luscious, but even they will not deny his gentle power. In a Cetra-Soria recording (LP 1240, $17.85) Lina Pagliughi, a real mistress of *bel canto* and *coloratura*, approaches perfection as Amina. Neither Cesare Siepi as Rodolfo nor Ferruccio Tagliavini as Elvino is of Pagliughi's standard, but the ensemble is expertly led by Franco Capuana, and the totality is a delight. It is exciting to watch Bellini accepting the excellent models of operatic construction which were about him, yet placing his own personality on every page he composed. Pagliughi gives a lesson in style by understanding completely that she is singing Bellini. Tagliavini often seems to have mistaken the composer for Ponchielli — or even Giordano. But it is notably Amina's opera, and it is wonderful to have a great Bellini role brought so brilliantly to full life.

About Wolf-Ferrari's "I Quattro Rusteghi" hangs an atmosphere of sadness quite at war with the broad farce of the libretto. The Cetra-Soria recording (LP 1239, $17.85) probably deserves some of the blame, for the voices are uniformly unattractive, and its dynamics are such that at any single dial-setting I could find I was confronted with either some inaudible passages or some painful volume. But the opera itself is vacuous. Wolf-Ferrari had not the genius by which Verdi in "Falstaff" and Puccini in "Gianni Schicchi" used the *buffa* traditions so as to make them seem new. He had a persistent sense of farce. He could turn out a pretty tune (there is a hard-pressed one in "I Quattro Rusteghi"). But on the basis of this opera, "I Giojelli," and "Il Segreto di Susanna" I should say that he had no more true sense of musical style than Gian-Carlo Menotti—and that he lacked Menotti's theatrical cunning.

The real problem is to get Bellini back on the stage—not "Norma" merely, though "Norma" first and most—but also "I Puritani" and "La Sonnambula." For Bellini was in many respects, though not all, the imaginative and expressive superior of Rossini and Donizetti, and therefore of any nineteenth-century Italian opera composer before Giuseppe Verdi.

—Herbert Weinstock.

—*Bettmann Archive*

Arrigo Boito—"dramatic truth."

THE versatile figure of Arrigo Boito walks the gallery of Italian opera from the 1860's to the first part of our own century in the rôle of innovator, with more than a dash of genius. Born into a cultured household at Padua—the son of an Italian painter, Silvestro Boito, and a Polish aristocrat, Countess Radolinska—Boito early developed the dual talents of musician and poet.

Perhaps he was too far removed from Italy's warm-blooded peasant stock to compose the soaring melodies of a Verdi or Bellini, the ebullient tunes of a Rossini or Donizetti. Boito was a theorist, an intellectual, and his music, to the end, remained a matter of individual taste. As librettist, however, he was to influence the course of Italian opera more than any other man. Under the spell of his verses for "Otello" and "Falstaff," even the great Verdi was moved to explore new fields of theatrical design. It is no accident that the timing of both these operas—so swift and elusive—remains unique in Verdian art. Their pacing, which seems advanced today, is the result of the master's collaboration with Boito, an inquiring and forceful spirit.

All his life, Boito (1842-1918) was devoted to the cause of symphonic drama as opposed to formalized opera. He admired the works of Wagner, with the one reservation—common to all Italians—that emphasis in the opera house should be placed upon the singing voice rather than the orchestra. He was also greatly influenced by Berlioz, whose setting of portions of the Goethe "Faust" ("The Damnation"), preceded his own "Mefistofele" by many years. Boito ranged for almost five decades in his search for dramatic truth and musical com-

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munication, from the early "Mefistofele" (1868-75) to the autumnal "Nerone," completed in 1911.

Unfortunately, "Nerone" is little more than a legend in the United States. Performances of this powerful and original score are rare today even in Italy. "Mefistofele," however, comes on periodically as a vehicle for virtuoso bassos. Chaliapin has sung it at the Metropolitan; Pinza in Chicago; and Rossi-Lemeni in San Francisco. Since these visits are spaced too many years apart, a recording of the work is welcome. "Mefistofele" in Naples, Rome, and Milan is a standard repertory piece. In this country it remains a novelty, not too easily accessible.

Boito based his opera on both parts of the Goethe play. A certain diffuseness has resulted. Intimate dramatic moments, such as the episode in Faust's study, the garden scene, and the death of Marguerite, seem like vignettes among the broad frescoes of the Prologue, the Kermesse, the Walpurgisnacht, and the Classical Sabbath. Two heroines—Marguerite and Helen of Troy—compete for attention in the course of a crowded action.

These discrepancies are atoned for by the beauty of the poetry and the vibrant quality of much of the score. The first audiences, in Boito's day, saw things otherwise. Perhaps antagonized by the sight of the composer-librettist's taking charge of the orchestra at the Scala premiere in 1868 (his limited experience with the baton laid him open to the charge of making a grand gesture on this occasion), and certainly bewildered by the novelty of the text and the strangeness of the music, the public received the opening night very coldly. The second—and final—performance in 1868 was interrupted by whistling and hisses, while admirers of the composer climbed onto the chairs of the parquet and leaped into the orchestra pit in order to seize his hand and console him. For many years after this debacle, Boito avoided the use of his name in all professional work, calling himself instead Tobia Gorrio. It was under this acrostic form of Arrigo Boito that he wrote the libretto for Ponchielli's "La Gioconda."

When the star of Richard Wagner rose in Italy, with the first performances there—at Bologna—of "Lohengrin" and, later, "Tannhäuser," it seemed logical that Boito, proponent of the music of the future, should become linked with Bologna's Teatro Comunale. His "Mefistofele" was revised and produced there in 1875. This time the work was a success, and it has grown in popularity ever

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since throughout Italy. Its beauties are many: the magnificent Prologue; the swirling scene of the Kermesse, with its odd premonitions of Stravinsky in the shifting metrical scheme; the episode in the garden; the prison duet, "Lontano, lontano," and the death of Marguerite; much of the Classical Sabbath—these are pages to which the listener can form a deep attachment. At times the melodic line may be labored, the instrumentation a bit thin. These are blemishes which should not work against the over-all acceptance of an opera with decided musical merits. As a treatment of the Goethe play, "Mefistofele" ranks somewhat below the Berlioz "Damnation" in dramatic and coloristic range, but it remains infinitely superior to that lacquered gewgaw which Gounod called "Faust."

The new recording (Urania URLP 230, $18.50) does the score general justice without quite achieving the wild sweep which Boito must have intended. Simona dall' Argine, a dramatic soprano worthy of attention, sings Helen of Troy with rich, commanding tones. Rosetta Noli, the Marguerite, is musical and sympathetic throughout, especially in the garden scene. Her performance of the famous prison aria, "L'altra notte," though capably sung, lacks tragic intensity.

Gianni Poggi, the Faust, is uniformly good, while Giulio Neri, in the title role, seems less consistently able. Mr. Neri owns a resonant bass voice which, when let alone, can give pleasure. Too often, in an attempt to suggest the diabolical, it sounds merely dry and small-scale.

Franco Capuana conducts with vigor, if no great poetic insight. Minor roles are taken competently, the chorus is effective, and the orchestra plays well. Dynamically, the range of the set is rather limited—especially in the Prologue—but the surfaces are excellent. This album can be recommended for its straightforward, sometimes moving, delivery of a score that deserves to be better known.

—Robert Lawrence

* * *

FOR the first time in my life I have heard a soprano whose voice sounds, frequently, like that of the great Rosa Raisa.

There are many factors in the new Cetra-Soria recording of Ponchielli's "La Gioconda" (LP 1241, $17.85) that make it the first choice of the two new recordings of this opera now on the market. But the greatest of these is the magnificent art of its protagonist, Maria Callas. This great promise for the future of dramatic soprano roles is in her early twenties Born in this country, she has had her vocal and musical education abroad. Her Gioconda is assured, passionate, a triumphant conception that starts at an incredibly high level and moves steadily upward from that point to a final act of blazing intensity. Callas has an even scale from a black-hued low chesty voice to an ecstatic high C and D flat of superb quality and perfect control. Her middle voice is of such velvet in forte and pianissimo as to startle you every time it is heard. And Callas has the innate intelligence to keep the voice alive to every inflection with the temperament of a Muzio.

No higher praise is possible from this poor typewriter than to have mentioned a contemporary soprano in the same paragraphs with Raisa and Muzio.

In addition to such singing as no American "Gioconda" audience has heard in twenty years, Cetra's set can boast of Fedora Barbieri's Laura, a sumptuous account except for the usual strident top tones. Its Cieca, Maria Amadini (known for excellent vocalising of a Vivaldi cantata) is skilful in what is often a crashing bore of a part. Paola Silveri's Barnaba has highlights not equalled by the other current baritone, and Giulio Neri has a more astonishing voice for Alvise than the brainier Corena in the Urania recording previously reviewed. Beyond considerations of individual singers, Cetra has produced one of its finest achievements in sound, and the pacing of conductor Antonino Votto is theatrically exciting.

The Turin Radio Orchestra and Chorus of Cetra turn in a vigorous and lustrous account. The final touch lies in the fact that Cetra's set has three records to its competitor's four.

Maria Callas—"blazing intensity."

I have left to the last the unhappy fact that Cetra's Gianni Poggi is impossibly boorish in sound, phrases like a meat chopper, and kills any slight feeling of sensuous appeal even in that lush dreamboat of tenors, "Cielo e mar." That's some accomplishment

—Paul Hume.

* * *

TO judge from the number and excellence of recorded operas we have had in the last year or so, it would appear that all the problems inherent thereto have been pretty well solved. However, man is still the fallible being of old, his judgment still open to question—as exemplified in two current productions that can, on the whole, be by-passed: RCA Victor's "Il Barbiere di Siviglia" with Victoria de los Angeles (RCA Victor LM 6104, $17.16) and the version of Gluck's "Iphigenia in Tauris" with Patricia Neway (Vox PL 7822, $11.90).

In prospect, the "Barber" with Serafin conducting and Miss De los Angeles as Rosina had a substantial interest. However, the experience of last fall's City Center performances with Serafin is recalled in these rather eccentric tempi, a lack of impelling dramatic force. I do not find Miss De los Angeles in attractive voice on these discs, and she certainly has no part of the comedy spirit essential for a Rosina. If this judgment may be open to question, there can scarcely be a difference about Gino Bechi, whose Figaro is simply not good enough, vocally, for a recording, whatever value it may have in a theatre or on the screen. Needless to say, Nicola Rossi-Lemeni is an excellent Basilio; and Nicola Monti is a fair enough tenor as Almaviva. In general, the voices are too prominent (relative to the orchestra), but the recording is, generally speaking, much better than the qualities of what it is called upon to reproduce. Some of the ensembles, for example, sound as though they had barely been rehearsed.

In the case of "Iphigenia" there were no particular anticipations, and they have not been exceeded. For all the nobility of the music and the persuasively animated conducting of it by Carlo Maria Giulini (a musician previously unknown to me), Iphigenia is a decidedly heavy role for Miss Neway's voice, nor does she have the kind of style or the authority with the French text to compensate for tonal shortcomings. Leopold Simoneau does well as Pylades, but the totality of the venture leaves a good deal to be desired. The recorded sound is variable: well-enough balanced, a little thin in string sound.

—I. K.

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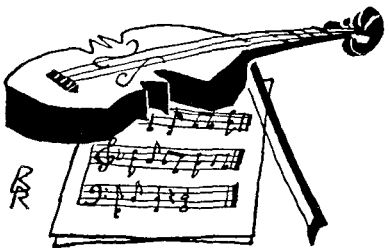

Brassy Berlioz

BERLIOZ: *"Symphonie Funèbre et Triomphale." Fritz Straub conducting Great Symphonic Brass Orchestra of Cologne, String Orchestra of Cologne, and the Kölnischer Chor.* (Lyrichord LL40, $5.95.)

THIS work does not lack for propagandists; even Wagner, for all his usual Francophobia, declared himself exalted by its "sublime fervor"; so I can hardly be doing the cause of Berlioz much harm if I confess that such transports are not for me. As in so much of Berlioz's music, there are isolated patches of noble poetry surrounded by thickets of rodomontade. The high point here is the melody for solo trombone in the second movement, one of those wide-spanned tunes that Berlioz excelled in, undulating slowly and haphazardly like a winding woodland stream. And the second theme in the opening movement, beautifully scored for clarinets and flutes, is likewise of high poetic assay. But with these nuggets goes baser rhetoric, where Berlioz seems intent predominantly on keeping his vast symphonic machine in motion.

Admittedly, a more adept performance than this one might yield a more enthusiastic reaction. (Wagner, it should be remembered, heard the symphony conducted by Berlioz himself.) Although Fritz Straub and his 135 instrumentalists have the field to themselves, so far as comparative phonographic judgments go, it is plain that the last word on this score is yet to be said. Certainly, the above-mentioned trombone melody could be played with greater technical assurance, and the final section—with its full panoply of wind, strings, and voices—could be less hectic in execution. The work poses some thorny problems of balance, a good many of which seemed to baffle Lyrichord's engineers.

—ROLAND GELATT.

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Recordings Reports: Classical LP's

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Bliss: Piano Concerto. Mewton-Wood, with the Utrecht Symphony Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. Concert Hall CHS 1167, $5.95.	Major works of Bliss are far from everyday occurrences, either in the concert hall or on records. However, those we have heard do not stimulate a desire for more. This one is in the Rachmaninoff manner, which hardly fascinates without the substance that makes the manner bearable. Rather soggy recorded sound, but the performance seems to be representative.
Dvorak: Serenade in D minor (Opus 44). The London Baroque Ensemble, Karl Haas directing. Decca DL 7533, $3.85.	A singularly successful disc, with first-rate musicianship applied to a work which should be much better known than it is. Though Dvorak is neither "London" nor "Baroque," neither, for that matter, is Haas. He senses all the derivations from Mozart's divertimento style in this work, infusing it beautifully with the vigor appropriate to Dvorak. Fine sound, too.
Grieg: "Symphonic Dances" (Opus 64), "Norwegian Dances" (Opus 35). Erik Tuxen conducting the Danish National Orchestra. Mercury MG 10132, $4.85.	The order of listing is that of the disc itself, though the "Norwegian Dances" are both better known and, on inspection, better music. However, it is well to have this attractive literature in such sympathetic performances, especially the perennial No. 4 of the "Norwegian" set. Warm, powerful sound.
Haydn: Concerto in D. Enrico Mainardi, cello, with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Decca DL 7536, $3.85.	Amiability is a worthwhile quality in music-making, but not when it slows down to the easy-going attitude heard here. In any case, it is a much less animated, less appropriate interpretative effort than Antonio Janigro's for Westminster. Tonally, the cello is nasal, the orchestral values not too convincing.
Mozart: Divertimento in F (No. 10, K.246). Willy Boskovsky, violin, etc. London LS 682, $4.95.	Better balanced, much more appealing work aurally than was heard in a previous edition on Period. Boskovsky is an extremely suave hand at this kind of music, and the two horn parts are beautifully played by Josef Veleba and Otto Nitsch. The work (with its prominent violin part) is an abiding joy, of course.
Mozart: Quartets in G minor (K.478) and E flat (K.493). Clifford Curzon, piano, with members of the Amadeus Quartet. London LL 679, $5.95.	Further, if hardly necessary, proof that Curzon is one of the most musicianly pianists of the day, and a master of the delicate art of nuance and tonal coloration so valuable in such enterprises as these. Altogether, the level of understanding is gratefully high, the execution altogether appropriate. At first sound, the studio impresses as over-resonant, but the final verdict is favorable.
Mozart: Symphonies No. 26 and 32 (K.184 and 318). Fritz Lehmann conducting the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra. Decca DL 4045, $2.50.	Decca's notion that a patron who only pays $2.50 for a record is not entitled to an annotation, whether the material is these symphonies or Tchaikovsky's "Marche Slave," is decidedly questionable. Phonophiles, at least, know that these works are more Italian "overtures" than the customary kind of Mozart symphonies, but neophytes might welcome a little guidance. Orderly performances, if not disturbingly spirited. Good reproduction.
Schubert: "Rosamunde" music. Hilde Rössel-Majdan, mezzo-soprano, with Dean Dixon conducting the orchestra of the Vienna State Opera Orchestra. Westminster WL 5182, $5.95.	An uncommonly satisfying venture, even if Westminster has been so rigorously scholarly as to deny us the familiar "Rosamunde" ("Zauberharfe") Overture in C, offering rather the D major overture Schubert utilized at the premiere. Some of the briefer bits could be spared, but Dixon does an amazing work of re-creation throughout. No one had reason to suspect him of any such robust Schubertian sympathies as this, and it is evident that his time abroad is being profitably spent. Fine sound, especially in the color details of the entr'actes and ballet music.
Strauss: "Ein Heldenleben." Antal Dorati conducting the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. Mercury MG 50012, $5.95.	A rather boisterous "Heldenleben," with some effects intensified, my impulses tell me, to make more startling Mercury's high-powered technical achievements. In any case, I do not hear the balance of content with controlled statement of it that makes the "Heldenlebens" of Mengelberg and Beecham at least no worse than Strauss left it. Otherwise a good work of execution by the excellent orchestra (Rafael Druian is the skilful concertmaster-soloist) and the technicians.
Strauss: "Freundliche Vision," etc. Heinrich Schlusnus, with Sebastian Peschko, piano. Decca DL 9622, $5.85.	Further samplings from the Schlusnus literature, with the Strauss of "Freundliche Vision" and "Nachtgang" companioned by such master lieder as Wolf's "Fussreise" and "Auch kleine Dinge," Schubert's "An die Leier" and "Lied eines Schiffers," Beethoven's "Wachtelschlag" and four of the greatest Brahms songs: "Von ewiger Liebe," "Am Sonntag Morgen," "Feldeinsamkeit," and "Die Mainacht." This is Volume 3 of the projected five-part undertaking, and highly satisfactory in all ways.
Verdi: "Quattro Pezzi Sacri." Theodore Rehmann conducting the Aachen Cathedral Choir and the Aachen Orchestra. Decca DL 9661, $5.85.	Remarkable execution by the Aachen Cathedral Choir, which fancies a rarefied, almost vibratoless sound not of the utmost suitability to this music but rather engrossing of itself. Those who heard the Toscanini version of the "Te Deum" as preface to his "Requiem" performance of a year ago are not likely to find this version (or Swoboda's on Concert Hall) wholly satisfactory, but it at least makes the stirring music audible. Smooth sound, rather distant pick-up.
Vivaldi: Concerto Grosso in D minor, etc. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. RCA Victor LM 1721, $5.72.	In terms of Stokowski's own annotations, this is a "dreamlike" evocation of "passionate eloquence" of "great formal architecture" and intricate musical design. In other words, the musical style is as overstressed as the literary, with inappropriately luxurious sonorities for this Vivaldi, a Frescobaldi "Gagliarda," a Lully "Nocturne," etc. Rich, pulsating sound in any case.
Wolf: "Italian Serenade." Koeckert Quartet. Decca DL 4044, $2.50.	A properly light-handed treatment of this music, which has not often fared so well on records. I prefer it to the form for multiple strings in which it is offered on Capitol H-8131, also to the alternate version by the Stradivarius Quartet. The coupled work is the Schubert quartet movement ("Quartet Satz") in C minor, likewise well played. —IRVING KOLODIN.

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CARL NIELSEN

(*Continued from page 49*)

key relationships. I do wish that this element had been soft-pedaled somewhat and that there had been a more extended treatment of Nielsen's structural principles—especially as manifested in the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Symphonies—as well as of his instrumentation. I have in mind here the fact that salient passages in these particular scores (written between 1916 and 1926) contain startling anticipations of the contemporary American symphonic idiom of Roy Harris and William Schuman (although I know that neither of these gentlemen had heard a Nielsen symphony until a couple of years ago!).

I would have liked much more quotation from Nielsen's delightful autobiography, "My Boyhood in Funen," since there is as yet no English translation available. Such quotes as there are merely whet the appetite for more. Simpson's book as a whole is an uneven achievement; for its writing ranges from the human and impassioned to the dully academic. Certainly its value as a reference book is unquestionable, for it is crammed with information, including a complete catalogue of the composer's work, plus a record list (keyed unfortunately to English rather than to American catalogues). It is good to have this volume at one's elbow, especially when listening to Nielsen's symphonies on discs or over the air; but this should not prevent some enterprising publisher from undertaking English translations of Nielsen's own "My Boyhood in Funen," and the best of the essays from "Living Music"—and above all the Meyer-Petersen biographical and musicological study.

—DAVID HALL.

Review Resume

BEETHOVEN: "An die ferne Geliebte," etc. Elena Nikolaidi, mezzo. Columbia ML 4628. *SR* Mar. 7.

BEETHOVEN: Concerto No. 5 ("Emperor"). Walter Gieseking, piano; with Philharmonia Orchestra, Von Karajan conducting. Columbia ML 4623. *SR* Mar. 14.

BEETHOVEN: "Diabelli" Variations. Claudio Arrau, piano. Decca DX 122. *SR* Mar. 14.

BEETHOVEN: Sonatas, Opus 53 and 109. Rudolf Serkin, piano. Columbia ML 4620. *SR* Mar. 14.

GRANADOS: "Goyescas." Frieda Valenzi, piano. Remington 199-116. *SR* Mar. 21.

GRANADOS: "Spanish Dances." Wilhelm Scheuchter conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra. M-G-M E3018. *SR* Mar. 21.

MALIPIERO: "La Cimarosiana." Warwick Braithwaite conducting Royal Opera Orchestra. M-G-M E3013. *SR* Mar. 21.

MOZART: Arias. Hilde Gueden, soprano. London LS 680. *SR* Mar. 7.

MOZART: Arias. Magda Laszlo, soprano. Westminster WL 5179. *SR* Mar. 7.

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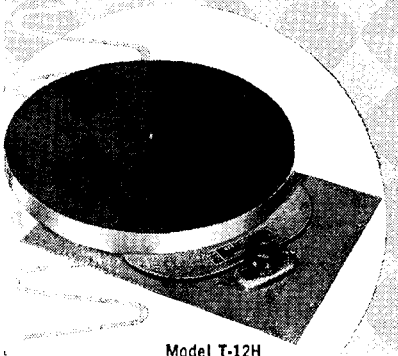

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I Have Not Changed My Mind

PABLO CASALS

EDITOR'S NOTE: In the January 20 issue of a French weekly newspaper called Paris-Comoedia *there appeared a news item reporting some impending concerts later this year by Pablo Casals. According to this source, the veteran cellist would be making public appearances in Switzerland and Belgium. This appeared to herald a change in "the spiritual boycott" which this artist imposed upon himself in 1945 as a protest against the continued recognition of General Franco's government by the democracies of the world. We wrote to Mr. Casals inquiring if this report was true and asking him to redefine the motives which have kept him from playing in public except in or near Prades.*

PERMIT me, first, to state that I am not going to conduct or play in public concerts in Switzerland, Belgium, or any place else this summer outside of our annual festival in Rousillon where I live.

My difficult and painful decision of voluntary exile in Prades came from the depths of my heart and conscience. I could not reconcile my feeling of grief for my native Spain with the natural desire to perform in countries like America, which I have known and loved since 1900, but whose governments have chosen to ignore my own country's plight.

To refuse to perform in a Soviet Russia or a Nazi Germany, as I have done since the inception of such contemporary regimes, seems only natural for a man of democratic principles. To have to refuse invitations from the democratic countries because of their governments' apparent lack of these same principles is indeed ironic and personally tragic for me. It is, however, the only attitude I can take that is consistent with my feelings. These feelings have not at any time changed since 1945.

My friend Albert Schweitzer, in discussing my attitude, once told me that, in his opinion, it is more important to create than to protest. I replied, "Why not both?"

The great artists and people who, since 1950, have honored me by their creation of and participation in our festivals have given me the joy to be able once again to make music without compromising my convictions.

Until such a time as the democracies find it possible to reject all dictatorships instead of only those immently threatening them, or until my conscience permits me to create without protesting, my present home shall remain the unique place of my artistic activities.

Festival de Prades
du 14 Juin au 5 Juillet 1953
Bach
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PAUL HENRY LANG

J. S. BACH: Six English Suites. Alexander Borovsky, piano. (Vox PL 7852, $5.95.) *Six French Suites. Fernando Valenti, harpsichord.* (Westminster WAL-310, $11.90)

THE suite represents one of the most interesting and significant genres in music. On the one hand it is the oldest type of cyclic musical form, on the other it is one of the most modern, i.e., the post-symphonic form of orchestral music. Yet it also stands in the middle of the road, pointing toward pre-classic chamber and orchestral music. Contrary to popular belief, the old suite was not exclusively a string of dances; from about 1650 it was opened with an overture or a *sinfonia* and by the end of the century there began to appear suites containing no dance pieces. The dance suite eventually turned in the direction of chamber music, while the other type tended toward the divertimento and hence became one of the contributing strains in the rising symphonic style. It is clear, then, that we are not dealing with what so many regard—and execute—as "playful tinkling," but with a highly refined and aristocratic kind of music. Bach's suites represent the acme of this art, uniting a number of different styles. But this elegant music was not German music; it was an importation, and the solid German cantors, fugue-builders and canonsmiths, looked upon the essentially Latin grace of the stylized dances with a bit of suspicion along with a great deal of fascination. Most of them when composing in this vein donned a French or Italian costume ("in the manner of Mr. Lully"); not so Bach. Perhaps the most admirable and moving thing about these suites is to see the creator of "The Art of Fugue" move about in this foreign world with absolute ease and consummate taste. The dances *are* elegant, but let us make no mistake: that immense heartbeat of pathos, that boundless vitality which built the monumental choruses of the Passions and the vast organ fugues is here too, albeit properly tamed.

The two recordings under consideration seem to revive the old feud between the supporters of piano and harpsichord. Which one is the proper medium of performance for this type of music? Neither party has a 100 per cent claim, and of course it goes without saying that an intelligent and musicianly performance on the piano is much to be preferred to a mechanical one on the harpsichord. But when we discuss the merits of the case dispassionately it becomes evident that while many of these works can be played quite satisfactorily on the piano, some of them won't come off at all, whereas the harpsichord can do justice to all of them. And the clarity of part writing stands out infinitely better on the old instrument.

These two recordings won't settle the argument. Were it not for faulty engineering, Mr. Valenti and the harpsichord would walk away with the honors. Mr. Borovsky is in a strange country, walking around with Baedeker and pocket dictionary. It is rather painful to hear a famous pianist exhibit such lack of understanding for this music. He changes tempos arbitrarily, adds crescendos and stresses where there should not be any, and indulges in those little "dramatic" interruptions the Germans so aptly call *Luftpause* (an annoying mannerism long since relegated to the encore division of musical lollypops), and the ornaments, that bane of players uninformed about "old" musical practices, plague him no end. But the most objectionable feature of Mr. Borovsky's playing is his lack of appreciation for the niceties and logic of linear writing, of the art of "voice leading."

Mr. Valenti is quite a different hand. He is at home in this world, handles the ornaments with ease, and, judging from the clear and lovely playing of a number of pieces, is a musician of poetic feeling. But our judging is made extremely difficult by the quality of the recording. Where was that microphone placed? Under the harpsichord, or perhaps right in it? We are compelled to use still another paraphrase of the old saw attributed to Clemenceau: "Music is too important a matter to be left to sound engineers." The latter must have heard about Mr. Stokowski and want to make Bach BIG, even if the music happens to be intimate keyboard music. Thus all I can say is that Mr. Valenti *seems* to be a fine performer and, aside from a few mannerisms and occasional heavy registration, knows his business.

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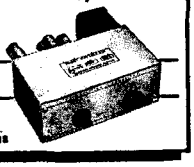

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THE OTHER SIDE

(IMPORTED RECORDINGS)

LONDON.

HMV's long-awaited "Tristan und Isolde" is at last at hand, and few would deny that it has been well worth waiting for. I have no doubt that the main motive behind this project was to perpetuate Kirsten Flagstad's celebrated assumption of the role of Isolde before it became too late; for good measure a "star" conductor was thrown in too, and the remarkable fact is that, instead of turning out to be a "starring vehicle" for two of HMV's top artists, this "Tristan" has emerged as a really splendid all-round achievement. The choice of a suitable Tristan must have been a difficult task. Various names were mentioned prior to last June, among them Set Svanholm and Ramon Vinay. The latter was indeed an outstanding success at Bayreuth last summer, and had it been possible to postpone this recording until the autumn, I would have chosen him without a moment's hesitation. As things were, the choice fell upon Ludwig Suthaus, who emerges from this ordeal with an enormously enhanced reputation. I have not heard the Urania set, but, judging by the notices it received, it cannot have done him justice. In this performance he shows himself to be an intelligent artist with considerable dramatic presence and a voice of dark and agreeable timbre. His upper register is perhaps a little suspect, and I would guess that he, more than anyone else in this performance, benefited from the fact that his effort could be spread out over a period of several days.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau was a surprising choice for Kurwenal (I am told that he himself was dubious at first as to whether he ought to undertake it). He does not really suggest the faithful old henchman, since his voice is neither dark enough to contrast with Tristan's, nor sufficiently powerful for the rough-hewn passages he has to sing in Act I. Nevertheless, I found his performance in the all-important third act both subtle and extremely moving. Blanche Thebom gives us the conventional mezzo-soprano view of Brangaene, though she sounds a little detached for so warm-hearted and impulsive a character, and her singing, frequently admirable, is from time to time marred by uncertain intonation. Wagner wrote this part for a soprano, and I have always felt that he knew what he was about, since there would be ample contrast between the two female voices if Brangaene were sung by a genuine lyric soprano. Much of the music lies uncomfortably high for a mezzo—the beautiful passage just after Isolde's Curse in Act I, for example—and I should have been inclined to try Elisabeth Schwarzkopf in this role (she sang a few bars of it most exquisitely on a Columbia record not long ago). Josef Greindl sings King Marke's music with much dignity and feeling even if his voice lacks the warm humanity of Ludwig Weber's; the smaller parts are admirably handled by Rudolf Schock (sailor and shepherd) and Edgar Evans (Melot).

The Philharmonia Orchestra plays magnificently under Furtwängler's direction; perhaps the strings might sound more opulent at Bayreuth, but otherwise the players' contribution is beyond praise. Furtwängler's handling of this score is probably the best work he has ever done for the gramophone; though his tempi are sometimes on the slow side, he never allows the drama to stagnate, and for the most part he has all his forces under firm, yet flexible control. Now and again he seems to be carried away by the music, and then he allows the "stage" to become submerged in torrents of orchestral sound, but in general the singers do not have to strain in order to make themselves heard. It is a measure of his achievement that the performance as a whole appears much greater than a mere sum of its parts and that "Tristan," which is given here without the slightest cut, does not seem a minute too long.

And what about Kirsten Flagstad? She has always been ready to admit that Isolde was not her "natural" part, that she felt herself temperamentally unsuited to it. There is some truth in this, though her singing has gained enormously in emotional range during recent years. On the other hand, it is a wonderful experience to hear Wagner's music sung with such accuracy and musicianship, such beautiful and opulent tone, and because of these rare virtues most of us find it easy to overlook those moments when the part calls for a degree of passion with which bountiful nature has not seen fit to endow this unique artist. For the most part she is in

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splendid voice, and any fears that this recording was delayed too long are shown to have been groundless. We shall probably never hear her sing this music in the opera house again but these six LP discs will enable us to rekindle our memories in the years to come in the most vivid fashion.

Technically, HMV's achievement is very satisfactory, if not outstanding. Balance between voices and orchestra is entirely just, and the sound for the most part is highly agreeable, but there were times when I longed for that greater incisiveness, those subtler timbres which Decca usually seems to achieve and which always appear to elude EMI. Decca's kind of sound would have been particularly apt at the beginning of the second act, when the distant hunting horns mingle magically with the murmurings of the nocturnal countryside, surely one of the most beautiful and evocative pieces of scoring Wagner gave us. Nevertheless, it is a recording of outstanding merit and it will be welcomed with open arms by every Wagnerite. As an all-round achievement it may not quite rank with Decca's Bayreuth "Parsifal," but apart from this paragon it is the most definitive version of a Wagner music-drama we have had on records, decidedly superior to Decca's or Columbia's "Meistersinger."

The current 78-rpm lists are barer than at any time since last autumn. There are three discs by the Philharmonia Orchestra: a sensitive performance of Weber's "Euryanthe" Overture, directed by Rudolf Schwarz (HMV), the Entr'acte No. 3 in B flat from Schubert's "Rosamunde," conducted by Paul Kletzki, and the popular "Children's Overture" by Roger Quilter, under George Weldon (both Columbia). The only Parlophone release worthy of note comes from the London Baroque Ensemble, directed, as always, by Karl Haas. It is Cherubini's "Pater Noster" for solo violin and string orchestra, a meditation, as it were, upon the Lord's Prayer. The disc, apart from its considerable musical interest and the fine quality of the performance (Jean Pougnet is the capable soloist), is notable too for its length, since the two twelve-inch sides provide a total of eleven minutes' music.

Helen Traubel, who sang in this country for the first time last month when she gave a recital at the Festival Hall, makes her debut on HMV with the "Herzeleide" Narrative from Act II of "Parsifal." Save for one or two strained top notes, this is a fine record which makes one wish that she could be induced to appear at Covent Garden.

—THOMAS HEINITZ.

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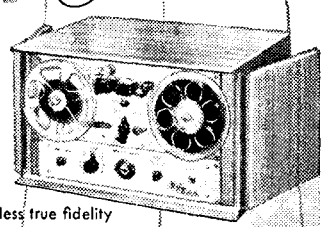

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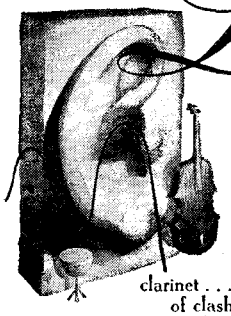

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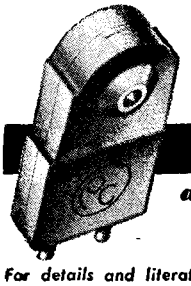

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Pop Roundup

AN OSCAR FOR PETERSON

A few years back, when the world seemed a little larger, itinerant jazz addicts would arrive here to dispense fascinating accounts of (a) Peck Kelly and (b) Oscar Peterson. These were wondrous jazz spirits, both pianists, whom legend had languishing in the wilderness in a determined withdrawal from areas ruled by crass commercial standards. Kelly, whom I have never heard, since he refuses to make records or come East, undoubtedly remains well adjusted to his obscurity somewhere in Texas. Peterson, a Canadian, has succumbed to the modern movement and to its prophet and promulgator, the impresario Norman Granz. We can report here and now that Peterson's talents dwarf the legends.

Peterson can do just about everything. He is the jazz piano soloist of his day—an amazing technician, endlessly inventive, a sensitive accompanist and a great rhythm man. Unlike Shearing and Garner, by whom he has been greatly influenced in recent years, he can extract a variety of colors from his instrument. In the middle of a hot-rod solo flight he may surprise the listener with a display of pedaling virtuosity or an involved one-figure based on chords extended so far as to suggest atonalism. Yet Peterson is about 90 per cent eclectic.

His sources are fairly obvious in a big sampling of LP's recently arrived from RCA Victor and Mercury. The former has imported eight Canadian sides of earlier vintages giving us an opportunity to study his growth (THIS IS OSCAR PETERSON, RCA Victor LPT 3006). Most of the evidence here says his pappy was Earl Hines, and "China Boy" is Exhibit A. In Peterson's recent work you may spot suggestions of that persistent jazz harmonist Claude Debussy, of bop saxman Charlie Parker, and even the deluxe society pianist Cy Walter. But Peterson usually borrows with discrimination and he has the ability to infuse an occasional tired riff with new excitement. Granz, intent on building him as a box-office draw, has been ladling him out in large long-playing portions. Besides an assortment of single 78's, this month has produced no less than five LP's of new Peterson solos. Each of four absorbing twelve-inch discs is devoted to a single composer. We have OSCAR PETERSON PLAYS COLE PORTER (Mercury MGC-603), IRVING BERLIN (MGC-604), GEORGE GERSHWIN (MGC-605), and DUKE ELLINGTON (MGC-606). The Ellington set is easily the most successful, probably because his tunes are meant to be played as jazz, and many of them are based on simple blues progressions. Oscar is perfectly at home here.

Dance Discs

Not too long ago we were complaining about the infrequent releasing of suitable dance sides. This month I've worn out several pairs of shoes to screen the best of a large lot. . . . RAY ANTHONY, THE YOUNG MAN WITH THE HORN (Capitol H373), is a collection of sides that have been successful recently as singles. There's good variety of tempo and a clear indication that Ray has left the Miller style to Ralph Flanagan and has gone over to Lunceford. His own pure, tasteful trumpet is evident throughout. . . . Another recommendation for dancers is BILLY MAY'S BACCHANALIA (Cap H374), with its interesting Lunceford-based sax slides. It contains an exceptionally pretty, dreamy arrangement of "Cocktails for Two." . . . In DANCE WITH LUIS ARCARAZ (RCA Victor LPM 3107), Luis is billed as "Mexico's Leading Interpreter of American Dance Music," and he's really more conscientious with his Yankee rhythms than are most of our native-born batoneers. Aside from the melodious, dominant trumpet, this is a Miller band. . . . Even the small labels are getting on the dance bandwagon. Mars records Woody Herman and "The New Third Herd," which appears less pretentious and no less interesting than several earlier herds. There's a jumping Ralph Burns arrangement of BUCK DANCE, and Woody sings and plays alto sax on the ballad A FOOL IN LOVE (Mars M600, 78 rpm) . . . Some of the best dance music around comes from the renovated Shuffle Rhythm Orchestra of Tommy Reynolds. The one-time Lunceford arranger Eddie Wilcox is writing Reynolds's book and it's practically pure Lunceford, diluted only by an undoubtedly commercial shuffle beat. Reynolds has also resurrected the one-time Jan Savitt vocalist Bon Bon, who performs his great specialty, IT'S A WONDERFUL WORLD. The overside is the oldie I AIN'T GOT NOBODY (Derby 820). —BILL SIMON.

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Curves & Compensation

AMONG audio's most recondite mysteries, none is more arcane than the business of "equalization" or "compensation." I hope that I can provide a few flashes of illumination on this new, very moot problem, currently far hotter than it is bright. But the following condensed notes should be prefaced by the warning that I, like that wise ethnologist W. H. R. Rivers, have "so keen a sense of the complexity of human progress that I distrust a simple explanation!"

Why Equalize? As should be common knowledge by now, disc recording deliberately departs from "flatness" (uniform intensity throughout the frequency spectrum). Low frequencies are progressively attenuated below an arbitrary "turnover" point in order to maintain uniform disc-groove widths. To minimize surface noise (and perhaps combat the notoriously poor high-frequency performance of most home reproducers), the "highs" are progressively "pre-emphasized." In theory, these recording characteristics (traditionally specified in detail as a graphed "curve") will be "equalized" by exactly obverse reproducing characteristics, thus re-achieving "flatness."

What Curves? For impressive technical reasons (upheld as dogma, but fortunately not entirely resistant to interpretative change), various disc makers favor—or feel committed to—different recording curves, with the unhappy consequence that no single, fixed equalization is possible for all or even the majority of record makes. An almost infinite variety of curves were used for 78's, but only two main types, plus an indeterminate number of variants, are employed for current LP's: (1.) Columbia/NAB*—based on the (now) NARTB† "transcription" standard, and used in all Columbia LP's and most if not all of those from Decca (USA), Westminster, Vox, Cetra, and others; (2.) AES—the Audio Engineering Society's standard playback curve, shrewdly developed to meet the problem primarily in reproducing (rather than recording) equipment design, and for which the obverse recording curve has been adopted by Capitol and Mercury, among others. Variants of these two types are favored by RCA Victor (which in 1952 changed its original long-play curve, featured by an abnormally high turnover frequency, to one now called "New Orthophonic," but which for all practical purposes is keyed to AES playback), London, and various smaller companies.

Where and How to Equalize. Since crystal pickups have an innate "rising bass" characteristic and most commercial sets normally attenuate "highs," a very rough equalization-approximation is built-in with most ordinary phonographs. You're stuck with it for all records, except insofar as you can modify its effect by tone-control juggling. Magnetic pickups (theoretically "flat," except for extreme "highs") *must* be equalized. Cheap pre-amplifiers do this at the low end only and even this much equalization is unvariable. More elaborate pre-amps, now usually included in high-quality amplifiers, provide a considerable variety of both "low" and "high" equalization choices, often designated for specific makes and types of records. Adjust as directed by the maker, but only *after* you have settled on the "best" tone-control settings (using good FM broadcast material) for your particular listening room and aural tastes. Don't be shocked if the equalization designations no longer apply, but relabel the settings as determined by trial and error.

Or, if no one combination seems consistently suitable for all releases by any one manufacturer, experiment until you find the most effective individual disc setting—and don't forget to make a note of it on the record jacket or label!

Cold-Comfort Conclusions. Remember that whatever degree of "fidelity" amplifier designers may claim, the following and crucial loudspeaker *never* is anywhere near "flat." Hence, the over-all system-response curve—or the sound you listen to—always is bumpy, even before your listening room's own characteristics wreak further havoc! The better your whole system, the more critical (but the more easily mastered) is its ability to equalize. When whatever equalization provisions you have seem to work little appreciable change, or at least no marked improvements, in what you hear, your equipment probably calls for replacement or repair.

Properly reproduced (with equalization as only one link in a long chain of equally vital functions), most current, undamaged LP's are far better in technical quality, regardless of the recording curve used, than any owner of non-laboratory-standard sound systems ever dreams.

—R. D. DARRELL.

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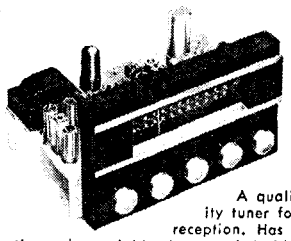

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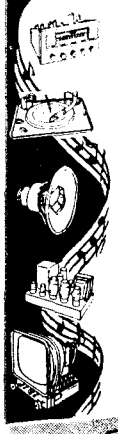

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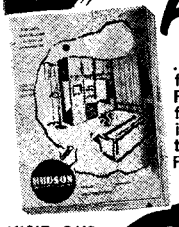

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(*Continued from page 43*)

apart chiefly by the kind of noise they made in their throats—'clucking' or 'grunting' was how Che Osman expressed it. The *lelemah* was loudest, he said, and made a noise like 'kha, kha.' One fish, whose name I didn't catch, said 'ah . . . oh . . . ah'—the sounds were nasal and well separated —when it was alone but something like 'ump . . . ump' when swimming in a shoal. Another fish said 'gho-ho-ho-oow.' *Beliak mata* made a sound like 'tikatikatika-socosocosoco'; the old man whispered this softly, as if to himself, rocking his head back and forth."

It is possible that fishermen long ago heard sounds at sea, and reported them ashore; of all persons, Rabelais is most likely to have picked up this fish tale and amplified it to suit his whim. A ghoulish parallel is supplied by the fact that Rabelais' sounds are of war and the engines of war; it was to the engines of war that our naval hydrophones were tuned when they first picked up the Chesapeake Bay croakers.

This is Rabelais' story: "When we were at sea, Junketing, Tipling, Discoursing, and telling Stories, Pantagruel rose and stood up to look out; then ask'd us, Do you hear nothing, Gentlemen? . . . At last we began to fancy that we also heard something, or at least that our Ears tingled; and the more we listen'd the plainder we discern'd the Voices, so as to distinguish Articulate Sounds. This mightily frighted us, and not without cause, since we could see nothing, yet heard such various sounds and Voices of Men, Women, Children, Horses, etc., insomuch that Panurge cry'd out, Cods Belly, there's no fooling with the Devil . . . let's fly. There is some Ambuscado hereabouts. . . .

"The Skipper made answer; Be not afraid, my Lord, we are on the Confines of the Frozen Sea, on which, about the beginning of last Winter, happen'd a great and bloody Fight between the Arimaspians and the Nephelibates. Then the Words and Cries of Men and Women, the hacking, slashing, and hewing of Battle-Axes, the shocking, knocking, and joulting of Armours and Harnesses, the neighing of Horses, and all other Martial Din and Noise, froze in the Air: And now the Rigor of the Winter being over, by the succeeding Serenity and Warmth of the Weather, they melt, and are heard.

"By jingo, quoth Panurge, the man talks somewhat like; I believe him: but couldn't we see some of 'em? Methinks I have read, that on the edge of the Mountain on which Moses received the Judaic Law, the People saw the Voices sensibly.—Here, here, said Pantagruel, here are some that are not yet thaw'd. He then throw'd us on the deck whole handfuls of frozen Words, which seem'd to us like your rough Sugar-Plumbs, of many Colors . . . and when we had somewhat warm'd them between our Hands, they melted like Snow, and we really heard them, but could not understand them, for it was a Barbarous Giggerish; one of them only that was pretty big, having been warm'd between Fryar John's Hands, gave a sound much like that of Chestnuts when they are thrown into the Fire without being first cut, which made us all start. This was the Report of a Field-piece in its time, cry'd Fryar John. . . .

"When they had been all melted together, we heard a strange Noise, Hin, hin, hin, hin, his, tick, tock, taack, brededin, brededack, frr, frr, frr, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, track, track, trr, trr, trr, trrr, trrrrrr, on, on, on, on, on, on, ououou-ouon, gog, magog, and I do not know what other barbarous Words, which, the Pilot said, were the Noise made by the Charging Squadrons, the Shock and Neighing of Horses.

"Then we heard some large ones go off like Drums and Fifes, and others like Clarions and Trumpets. Believe me, we had very good sport with them."

It is just possible that to Rabelais, a man who wrote so persuasively of frozen sounds, the idea of hydrophones, 2,000 fathom cables, and tape recording might seem a little tame. His eyes might twinkle on hearing of them, however, and he might state, with some justice, that all this paraphernalia could do was document things as they exist; that his frozen sounds were enormously superior, because they could also take us into the past; the People who saw Voices sensibly as Moses received the Judaic Law were at least one step ahead of televiewers (he might have a kind word here for Aldous Huxley, who put "feelies" in his "Brave New World"); and that strange sounds from the deep were no newer than the Old Testament, wherein it had been doubtfully enquired, "Canst thou draw out Leviathan with a hook?"

And since it would be only fair to set down both sides of this conversation, perhaps it should be reported that our scientists replied (by Frozen Words shot backward) that "We haven't yet drawn out Leviathan with a hook, but we may have caught him with a hydrophone."

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Spotlight on the Moderns

THERE is a surprise in store for anyone who plays the new Stravinsky "Histoire du Soldat" unwittingly expecting it to be just another recorded version of the masterly instrumental suite that passes under that name (Vox PL 7960, $5.95). For the original French dialogue of Stravinsky's Swiss collaborator, Ramuz, is included on this LP—some of it in the rhythmic formation through which Stravinsky superimposed it charmingly on the music, but most of it all by itself for long, long stretches at a time. The music has noticeably survived the stage piece of which it was a major component, and occasional revivals of the whole in English have been none too happy. This may be because the drama is non-transplantable from its native Swiss climate. The Russian tale of the soldier who deserts and who is victimized by the devil was severed, to be sure, from any given time or place, and the music accordingly aimed at cosmopolitanism. (Thus, we have the international assortment of dances: tango, waltz, ragtime.) But while Stravinsky achieved a universality and made here his first important step towards liberating himself from the circumscribing influence of Russian folk style, Ramuz did not avoid a certain provincialism.

However this may be, music effectively mated with spoken word is so rare that the few passages of this description in "Soldat" are a very great treat indeed, and compensate for the lengthly portions of unaccompanied French dialogue that may be either unintelligible or uninteresting to the listener. The speakers are all very fine and the instrumentalists under the direction of Fernand Oubradous play very neatly. Stravinsky's old Columbia recording (78 rpm) of the music alone set a high standard, and Oubradous, who, I suspect, had the sense to consult that model, approaches that standard far more closely than Bernstein in his version for Victor. The Vox LP has not only the advantage of the latest recording technique, but of that technique at its best. It is remarkably free of the extra reverberation so cherished these days, and is none the less faithful in being so.

There is a good chance that Stravinsky will himself give us the definitive LP version one of these days, but Vox will still offer the bonus of the words for those who are interested. By contrast, the Piano Concerto with Stravinsky conducting and his son, Soulima, as soloist (RCA Victor LM 7010, $4.67) quite supplants the recent Concert Hall release conducted by Walter Goehr. I warmly welcomed the Goehr recording two months ago because it was competent and respectable enough to fill the need for this work in the LP catalogue. But the Victor LP brings out much more of the intrinsic meaning of the work and is far better paced, much more animated. For the first movement alone, for example, Stravinsky takes about a minute and a half less than Goehr.

LAST month I had occasion to felicitate Columbia on its new project of recording American chamber music. This time honors go to RCA Victor for unexpected service to American music on the part of a major record company. It is to be hoped that Roger Goeb's Third Symphony, released with the sponsorship of the American Composers Alliance, is only the beginning of what may turn out to be a fruitful collaboration (LM 1727, $5.72). Stokowski's burning enthusiasm these days for the cause of American music provided, of course, the intermediary ground on which ACA and RCA could be brought together.

Goeb's symphony may not be one of the most distinguished products in the available list of American works by our less established composers, but it does not descend to the level of slick commercialism of such a work as Morton Gould's "Latin-American Symphonette" (Mercury MG 4002, $4.85). (Goeb comes, however, precariously near it in his finale, where there is far too much Latin-American rhythm.) Goeb is a prolific composer and one of our most honest workmen. He takes some chances with dissonance and does not shy from having more than one active element going on at once. He relies too much on ostinato to establish animated continuity, and for this reason I think he comes out best in the slow movement, where he cannot do so as much and is obliged to be more lyrical and resourceful as a result.

A conductor for the four players in Bartók's powerful Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion on the reverse side of the Goeb symphony may seem redundant. But it is really not a bad idea, and it is just the sort of situation for Stokowski to practise his magic. Gerson Yessin and Raymond Viola, pianists, and Elayne Jones and Alfred Howard, percussion, are all excellent. I still have an attachment to some of the balances in the old Dial version, where percussion is not fa-

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vored quite so much as here. But this one is more live and whips up a lot of excitement.

"Three Places in New England" of Charles Ives is New England impressionism, and to get the most out of it one must be willing to lose oneself in the realm of the composer's literary fantasy (American Recording Society 27, $4.95). The slow parts suggest an American counterpart of Delius with the foresight and daring of a Berg. An atmosphere and orchestral invention comparable to Berg's is often the background to a simple, homely folk tune. The work as a whole is Ives at his very best, and is one of the significant landmarks in American music. I think the relative brevity of the movements has something to do with its success, for the Ives method does not lend itself to extended development, and the first of the three pieces, which is the longest, does not seem, by the time the work is over, to have been the best. Striking polyphony and polyrhythm come in the wake of the Fourth of July celebration on a Connecticut town square in the second piece. Ives catches the precise curve of the town band with the amateur players who cannot keep in time and who thus continue off the beat. Ives was also keen to reproduce the experience of watching a parade while one band approaches and another recedes, playing different music.

The pedestrianism and clichés of Robert McBride's Violin Concerto, well played by Maurice Wilk on the reverse side, will come as a shock after the uncompromising, inward expression of Ives. The colloquialisms of popular music and show business are not lifted from the crass context in which we encounter them from day to day. It is not far, in this sense, from Gould's "Latin-American Symphonette," which is coupled, on the Mercury LP, with Barber's familiar "School for Scandal" Overture, Adagio, and Essay No. 1, of which the first stands up remarkably well.

Walter Hendl is the superb conductor on the ARS recording and Hanson is well in command as conductor of Gould and Barber. The Minneapolis Symphony's expert recording of Bartók's Divertimento, available on RCA LM 1185 with Mozart's "Paris" Symphony, has been reissued with Kodály's "Háry János" Suite, newly recorded by the same orchestra, again under Dorati (RCA Victor LM 1750, $5.72). The Hungarian nationality of the composers is the obvious basis for the new coupling, but I wager many listeners will find Bartók's fresh music to have more in common with Mozart's clear thinking than with Kodály's naive and predictable tone-painting. —ARTHUR BERGER.

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Letters to the *RECORDINGS* Editor

Pro & Cantelli

▶ CONGRATULATIONS ON your discerning review of Guido Cantelli [*SR* Feb. 28]. Orchestral musicians are usually the only good judges of a conductor. You are one of the critics who proves to be an exception. I begin to think that everything "comes out the same way," musically, because he is scorebound. In fact, I think a lot of our conductors today are paralyzed at the thought of forgetting their scores. Thus they can't relax and make music.

ORCHESTRAL MUSICIAN.

New York, N. Y.

▶ THIS IS IN REGARD to your commentary on Guido Cantelli. I am astounded that one of your apparent grasp of and insight into those qualities that make for great music did not perceive the presence of a genius. . . . In the many years that I have been listening to the music of Beethoven, for the first time last night . . . I heard the innermost thoughts of Beethoven, and he spoke eloquently and grandly through Cantelli. I suggest that to avoid revealing any shortcomings in your understanding and appreciation of music you hear Cantelli conducting, preferably the NBC Symphony, before making further comment about his musicianship. Thereafter, any adverse criticism could spring only from a purely subjective and biased attitude, thus rendering it invalid.

K. B. KRMPOTICH.

New York, N. Y.

Roger Désormière

▶ IN *SR* OCTOBER 25, 1952, your record reviewer paid a tribute to Roger Désormière, the French conductor, wondering whether the record had been made after Désormière's recovery. Alas, this is not the fact. This poor man is still very ill, and cannot work at all. I told him about this article and he "looked" very pleased. I put it this way because he is not able to speak! It is a very mysterious illness, and a most disconcerting one. . . . He listens to the radio, recognizes everything, but cannot talk. The poor man looked so sad and discouraged. Perhaps your reviewer would be interested to know about that and, with Désormière's friends, hope for a recovery.

JEAN BINET.

Trelex, Vaud, Switzerland.

Berger Unmasked

▶ CONGRATULATIONS TO Arthur Berger for the "poison pen" treatment he gave John Cage [*SR* Feb. 28]. It seems astonishing at this late date that one of the most accomplished craftsmen in contemporary music, an artist whose work is splendidly designed and uncommonly well-written, should be attacked with such venom. In fact, Mr. Berger doesn't seem to like anything he hears of the wonderful contribution to contemporary music by the Columbia people except a piece by Copland. But that's all right, Mr. Berger, he is safely among the "accepted" and "understood"; we all like Copland too.

HARRY HEWITT.

Ardmore, Pa.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Berger's pen has been carefully examined, and bears no trace of "poison."*

Edman's Attitude

▶ IN HIS REVIEW of the recording "Sixteen Sonnets of William Shakespeare" [*SR* Feb. 28] Irwin Edman states: "Mr. Allen is the diseur of a radio program called 'Words to Remember,' a sentimental, perhaps forgivably sentimental, name for a radio program." In an otherwise vitriolic, perhaps unforgivably vitriolic review, it is refreshing to note Mr. Edman's kindness . . . toward the title of the program, at least. Understandable kindness, however, in that the title is of Mr. Edman's own coinage. Would he forgive as benevolently Mr. Allen's title "Remembered Words," or does that strike Mr. Edman as being downright maudlin? . . .

LLOYD MOSS.

New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *However remembered, Allen's title does not alter any part of the recorded content, which was Edman's area of operation.*

▶ IRWIN EDMAN'S columns are enjoyable and to the point. Why are recordings of the poetry of the English language treated on records as though limited by commercial

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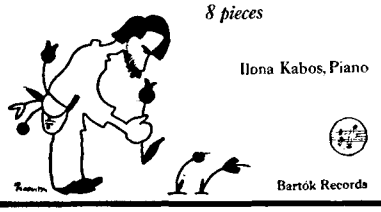

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L. T. MILIC.

Bozeman, Mont.

SOS for TMN

▶ THIS IS AN SOS to any library or individual who has a file (preferably complete) of the *Talking Machine News*, a British trade paper which began publication in 1903 and continued into the early Thirties. It's a sorely needed source of reference in connection with my forthcoming history of the phonograph, and I'll be most grateful if any possessors of this publication would get in touch with me, care of *The Saturday Review*, with a view to selling or lending me their copies.

ROLAND GELATT.

New York, N. Y.

BSO Rehearsals

▶ HOW MANY MUSIC LOVERS have been admitted to rehearsals of a top symphony orchestra? In my own appreciation development, nothing has been more enlightening than those vivid Boston Symphony rehearsals of five years ago, broadcast on NBC. Outside of a few Eastern cities, I believe these transcriptions were largely allocated to off hours, and were not widely heard then. What a fitting project for RCA Victor's "Koussevitzky Memorial Series" would be an LP edition of some of these unforgettable, intensely alive moments.

R. WORTHINGTON.

Washington Court House, O.

Non-Electric Player

▶ ABOUT THE PROBLEM of the music lover who has no supply of 110 volt AC, I have a suggestion.

Last summer one of our customers went to the high Sierras (11,000 feet elevation) and he insisted that we provide him with something that would let him play his Badura-Skoda recordings of the Bach Partitas and other discs.

We fitted out the following gear for him: one H-500 Zenith Trans-Oceanic Portable radio; one spring-wound variable speed turntable adjusted to turn from 80 to 30 rpm; one Astatic arm with turnover cartridge. The turntable and arm were mounted in a sturdy box, and the connector with jack to fit the earphone take-off, supplied as standard equipment with the Zenith (converted to serve as input to the H-500 power stage), was coiled up inside so that nothing loose could be left behind. Tested at the shop before packing, it was found that the spring-wound motor ran acceptably for about eight to ten minutes. This is enough for the average symphonic movement or for several sections of the Partitas, but it was difficult to keep absolutely constant at 33⅓ rpm.

In the mountains the temperature drops way low even in August, so it was necessary to keep a can of Sterno under the box and motor to warm it up enough to play at all. With all the problems, it was worth the trouble, and it must have been a rare sight indeed to come upon a phonograph of any sort that far from any electricity.

The motor was from a Victor Talking Machine circa 1916, and such a piece of gear might do very well in Central America where your correspondent lives. It would be well, I think, to clean the motor and repack it with a very thin oil even though leakage might follow. The batteries will last a respectable time even with fairly constant use and they aren't so very expensive to replace, so that a device can be made at a decent price which will at least provide music-most-longed-for even in the remote sections of this globe.

LEO KEPLER.

Hollywood, Calif.

Old Records Wanted

▶ CARNEGIE LIBRARY of Wilberforce University is striving to maintain a record collection for the use of students, faculty, and residents of the Wilberforce University. Wilberforce is a small liberal arts college, and like all small schools it is facing budgetary difficulties.

At present we have a small collection of about 250 records, and a small portable record player. I wonder if any of your readers would like to donate some of their recordings they no longer need or want. They would fill a great need here.

CASPER LEROY JORDAN,
Chief Librarian,
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Sibelius Society

▶ WHAT ARE THE CHANCES of a reissue on LP sometime in the near future of some, or all, of the Sibelius Society albums? I have in mind especially the now irreplaceable performances by Robert Kajanus and Serge Koussevitzky.

EDWIN RICHARD KAMMIN.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *RCA Victor reports that little demand for these recordings has been registered either by the public or the trade. For the present, then, the prospect of reissues seems slim.*

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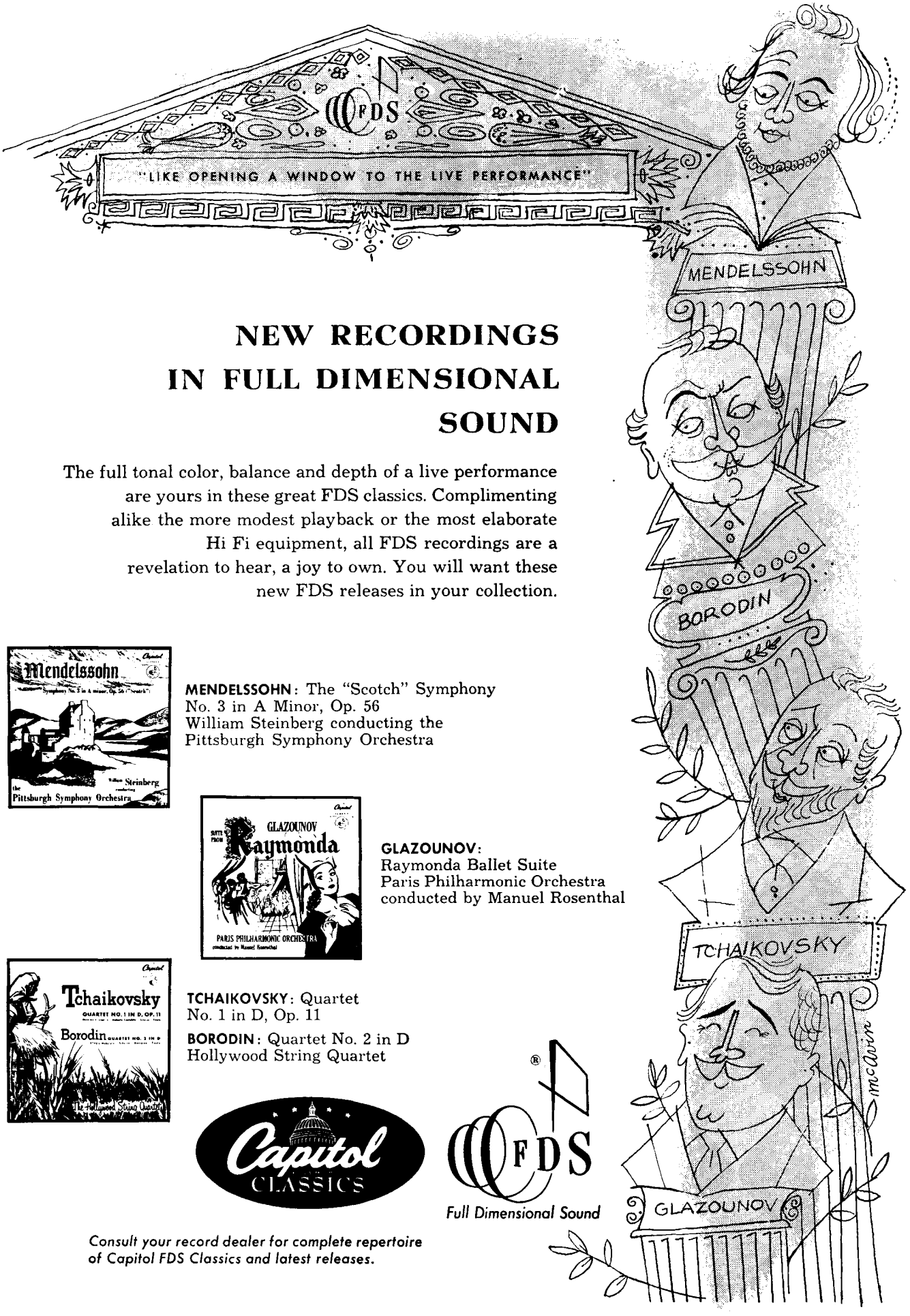

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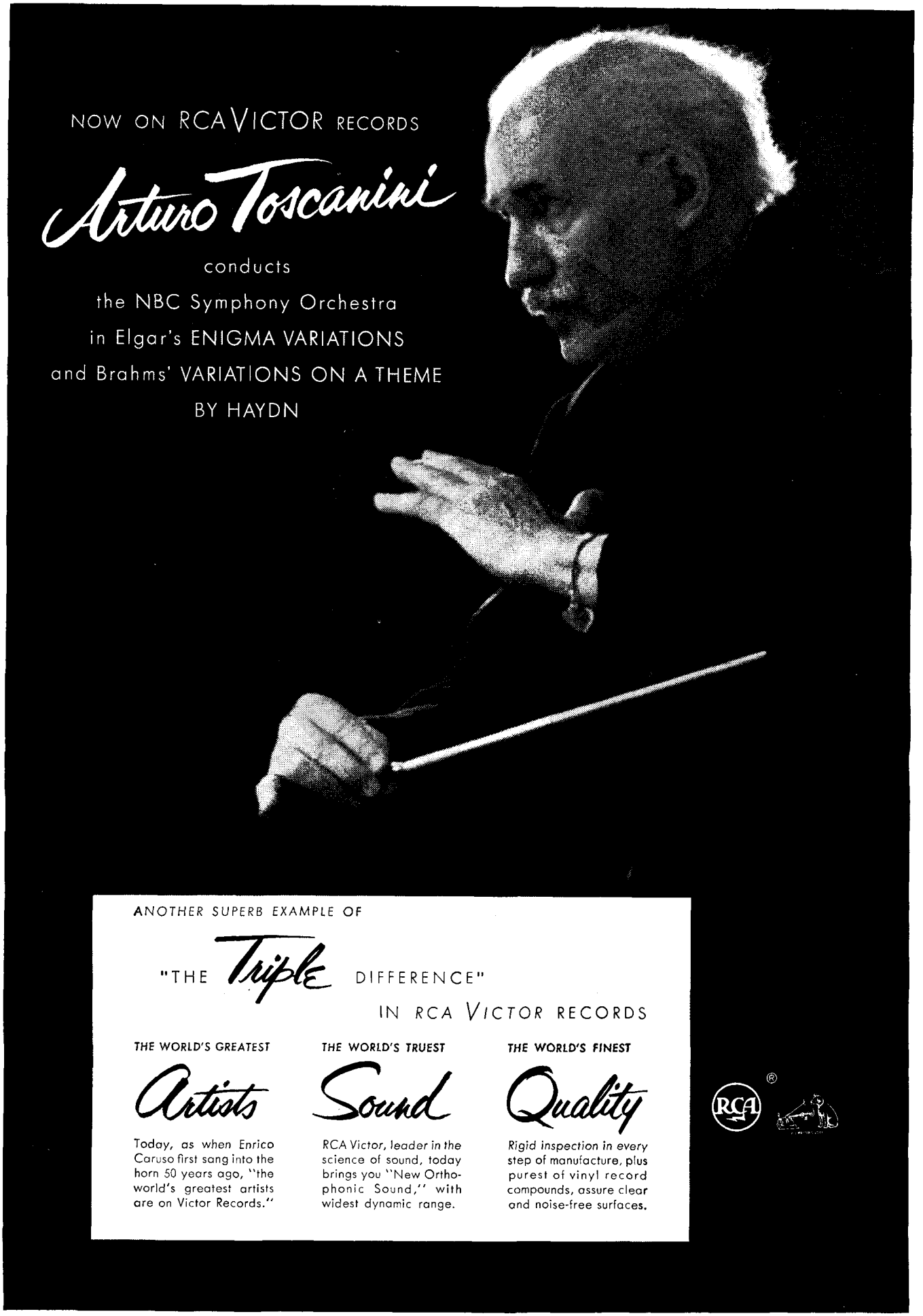
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